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PREVIEW COLLEGE *Sports* FOOTBALL 99

114

DIVISION 1 TEAMS

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Projected Lineups
Complete Schedules
Top Recruiters

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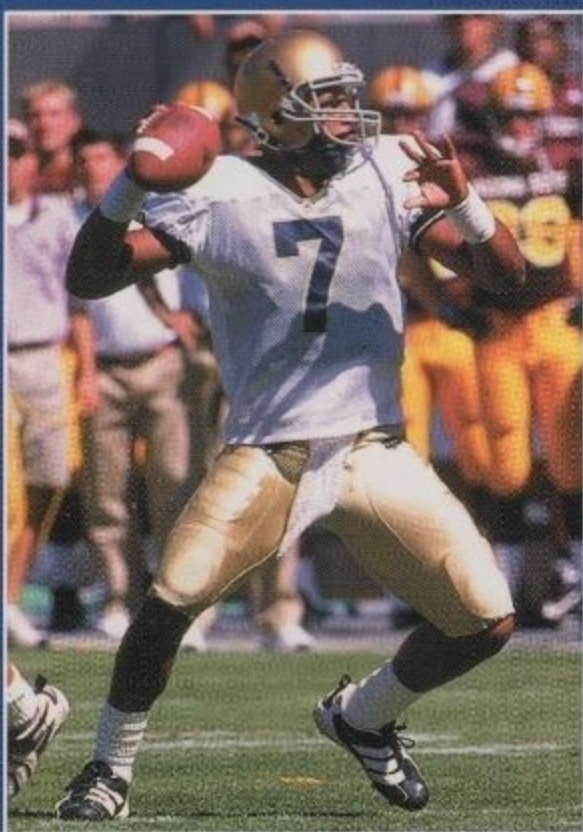
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NCAA TOP 25

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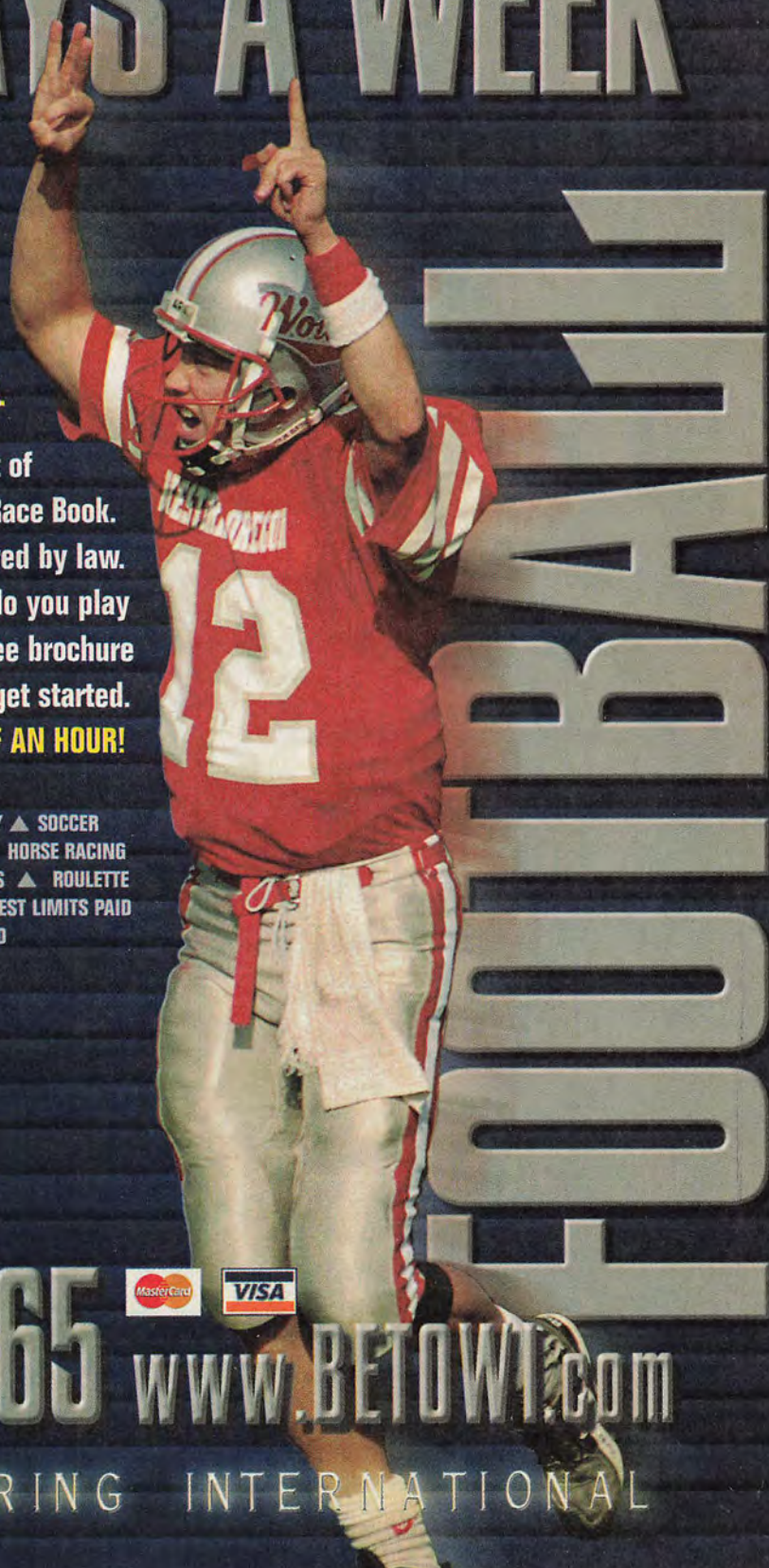


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College Football Past, Present and Future

BY BILL DOHERTY

With Y2K on the immediate horizon, we at *Preview Sports College Football '99* felt it was as the perfect time to mix in a glance back at the 20th century in college football with a comprehensive look at the 1999 season and the future of the sport.

We commissioned one of the nation's most respected gridiron writers, Michael Bradley, to take on the near-impossible job of putting together a decade-by-decade snapshot of college football, as well as picking an all-century team. Think about that for a second. How do you pick the best running backs of the 20th century? How do you compare the exploits of a Red Grange with those of Ricky Williams? You do your homework.

Bradley, with the help of Kent Stephens, an archivist at the College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, Indiana, attacked the task with same ferocity that current day Virginia Tech defensive end Corey Moore attacks quarterbacks. Turn to page 10 and check out the fruits of his labors. We believe that the story will be a quick history lesson for you and will hopefully cause some healthy car-ride debates between fathers and sons (and maybe grandfathers) about who are the very best players of this century.

And if you don't agree us, drop us a letter or an e-mail at preview@transcontinental.ca. We'd love to hear from you, our readers.

In addition to taking a look in the rearview mirror, we also look ahead with our selections of our 21st-century

prototype players and our 21st-century prototype coach. On offense, the perfect 21st-century specimen is Georgia sophomore quarterback Quincy Carter (see page 24). Carter has the combination of size, arm strength, smarts and foot speed that make NFL scouts drool.

On the defensive side of the ball, we believe the perfect 21st-century beast is Penn State linebacker LaVar Arrington (see page 22), who is drawing comparisons to a young Lawrence Taylor with his disruptive play.

Our coach to watch in the early 21st century is Texas head man Mack Brown, who corralled the nation's best recruiting class after last year's breakthrough season. Brown is featured (see page 23) because, more than an old-time X-and-O man, he's a marketing whiz and a great public speaker. In short, he's the ultimate 21st-century salesman—the type of guy we figure will be winning national titles after the Bobby Bowdens and Joe Paternos hang up their whistles.

Speaking of Bowden, Florida State's our preseason No. 1. But the race for No. 1 is as wide open as a stretch of state highway at three in the morning. That's why you need *Preview Sports College Football '99*—so you'll be well-versed in the past (the best players of the soon-to-be finished 20th century), the present (our choices to be top players and teams to watch in 1999 in the Division I-A, I-AA, II and III ranks) as well as the future of college football.

We feel that this is our best college football preview magazine ever. Thanks for joining us.

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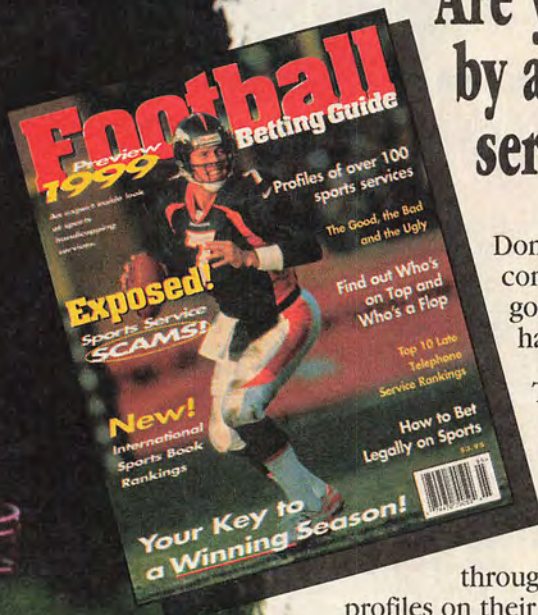
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OVERALL (All Teams)	\$15,000 CASH	\$5,000 CASH	\$2,500 CASH	\$1,500 CASH	\$1,000 CASH	\$750 CASH	\$500 CASH	\$250 CASH	\$100 CASH	\$50 CASH
LEAGUE (25 Teams)	\$500 CASH	\$250 CASH	\$100 CASH	\$50 CASH	\$25 CASH	Plus! A 50% off entry coupon to next year's game will be awarded to each of the 24 teams in the league with the Grand Prize Winner!				
WEEKLY (All Teams)	\$100 CASH	\$50 CASH	\$30 CASH	\$20 CASH	\$10 CASH	Congratulations! To Last Year's Winner Greg Gmiterko, Chanhassen, MN				

Entry Deadline	First Entry	Additional Entries
By July 24	\$29.95	\$24.95
By Aug. 14	\$39.95	\$34.95
By Sept. 11	\$49.95	\$44.95

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- Teams in each league are sorted by each team's total points. The team with the highest point total will be first and the team with the lowest point total will be last.
- To determine overall standings, all teams in *MSNBC Sports Fantasy Football* are sorted by each team's total points.
- Points are accumulated weekly for all 22 starting players and defense/special teams. The week begins with games played on Thursday and ends with games played on Monday. The game begins with Week 1.
- For each of your starting players whose NFL team wins that week, you will get three points. If your starting defense wins that week, you will get three points.
- Defense points allowed is based on the final score of the game versus the defense/special team selected.
- Yards from defense/special teams' returns do not count.
- Two point conversion points are awarded to the player scoring the conversion.

- Teams will receive 0.05 points for each passing yard and 0.10 points for each receiving or rushing yard.
- All points accumulated by the players on the starting lineup, regardless of what position they play during the season, contribute to a team's point totals.
- A player's points are added to your team's point totals only during the weeks that he is in your starting lineup.
- Bench players' points do not contribute to your team's point totals for the weeks they are not in the starting lineup.
- Points by a player before he was on your roster do not count.
- Pre-season, playoff, and pro bowl points do not contribute to your team's point totals.
- To determine weekly winners each Tuesday, the point totals from games played the previous 5 days (Thursday-Monday) will be used. First prizes will be awarded September 21, 1999, and will be based on games played September 19-20.

SCORING

PASSING	
Passing TD	3 Points
20 Passing Yds*	1 Point
RECEIVING	
Receiving TD	3 Points
10 Receiving Yds**	1 Point
2 pt. Conversion	2 Points
RUSHING	
Rushing TD	6 Points
10 Rushing Yds**	1 Point
2 pt. Conversion	2 Points
OTHER TD'S BY PLAYER	
Any other TD	6 Points
Such as KO Return, Punt Return, Interception Return or a Recovery	
*0.05 Point awarded for each passing yard	
**0.10 Point awarded for each rushing or receiving yard	
KICKING	
Field Goal	3 Points
Extra Point	1 Point
DEFENSE/SPECIAL TEAMS	
Shutout	15 Points
1-10 Pts Allowed	10 Points
11-20 Pts Allowed	5 Points
Safety	2 Points
Any Defensive or Special Teams TD	6 Points
TEAM VICTORY	
Each Player	3 Points
Def/Special Team	3 Points

All values are in 000's. Values & Positions do not change. Bench can be made up of any mix of players & teams.

KICKERS			QUARTERBACKS			QUARTERBACKS (cont)			RUNNING BACKS			RUNNING BACKS (cont)			RUNNING BACKS (cont)		
NO PLAYER	TM	VAL	NO PLAYER	TM	VAL	NO PLAYER	TM	VAL	NO PLAYER	TM	VAL	NO PLAYER	TM	VAL	NO PLAYER	TM	VAL
1 ANDERSON, GARY	MIN	3140	101 FAVRE, BRETT	GB	7060	130 KANELL, DANNY	ATL	2730	201 DAVIS, TERRELL	DEN	6900	218 LEVENS, DORSEY	GB	3610	247 FLETCHER, TERRELL	SD	1630
2 DEL GRECO, AL	TEN	2950	102 YOUNG, STEVE	SF	6820	131 GEORGE, JEFF	MIN	2570	202 TAYLOR, FRED	JAC	5350	219 SMITH, ROBERT	MIN	3550	248 BENNETT, DONNELL	KC	1610
3 CUNNINGHAM, RICHIE	DAL	2950	103 PLUMMER, JAKE	ARZ	6140	132 LEAF, RYAN	SD	2540	203 ANDERSON, JAMAL	ATL	5330	220 EDWARDS, ROBERT	NE	3400	249 JOHNSON, ANTHONY	CAR	1610
4 LONGWELL, RYAN	GB	2890	104 TESTAVERDE, VINNY	NYJ	5890	133 CANNON, RICH	OAK	2530	204 SANDERS, BARRY	DET	5140	221 HOLMES, PRIEST	BAL	3370	250 JOHNSON, JAMES	MIA	1600
5 VINATIERI, ADAM	NE	2810	105 BLEDSOE, DREW	NE	5700	134 WHELIHAN, CRAIG	SD	2460	205 WATTERS, RICKY	SEA	4870	222 ALLEN, TERRY	OAK	3170	251 KONRAD, ROB	MIA	1600
6 HALL, JOHN	NYJ	2800	106 ELWAY, JOHN	N/A	5570	135 FREROTTE, GUS	DET	2450	206 FAULK, MARSHALL	STL	4770	223 KAUFMAN, NAPOLEON	N/A	3070	252 FAULK, KEVIN	NE	1600
7 ELAM, JASON	DEN	2800	107 CUNNINGHAM, RANDALL	MIN	5540	136 GRAHAM, KENT	NYG	2300	207 SMITH, EMMITT	DAL	4610	224 HICKS, SKIP	WAS	3030	253 MONTGOMERY, JOE	NYG	1600
8 HOLLIS, MIKE	JAC	2790	108 BRUNELL, MARK	JAC	5470	137 GRBAC, ELVIS	KC	2170	208 MARTIN, CURTIS	NYJ	4580	225 ALSTOTT, MIKE	TB	3010	254 CLOUD, MIKE	KC	1600
9 CHRISTIE, STEVE	BUF	2630	109 MCNAIR, STEVE	TEN	5260	138 BRISTER, BUBBY	DEN	2120	209 GEORGE, EDDIE	TEN	4210	226 LANE, FRED	CAR	2800	255 FAZANDE, JERMAINE	SD	1600
10 KASAY, JOHN	CAR	2550	110 MARINO, DAN	MIA	4970	139 COUCH, TIM	CLE	2000	210 HEARST, GARRISON	SF	4190	227 MEANS, NATRONE	SD	2550	256 GARNER, CHARLIE	N/A	1570
11 MARE, OLINDO	MIA	2520	111 CHANDLER, CHRIS	ATL	4820	140 MCNABB, DONOVAN	PHI	2000	211 DILLON, COREY	CIN	4160	228 MORRIS, BAM	KC	2460	257 BATES, MARIO	ARZ	1460
12 WILKINS, JEFF	STL	2510	112 STEWART, KODELL	PIT	4590	141 SMITH, AKILI	CIN	2000	212 BETTIS, JEROME	PIT	3990	229 AVERY, JOHN	MIA	2330	258 WILLIAMS, HARVEY	OAK	1460
13 ANDERSEN, MORTON	ATL	2490	113 DILFER, TRENT	TB	4590	142 CULPEPPER, DAUNTE	MIN	2000	213 STALEY, DUCE	PHI	3920	230 THOMAS, THURMAN	BUF	2270	259 HILL, GREG	STL	1420
14 BLANCHARD, CARY	WAS	2450	114 MANNING, PEYTON	IND	4400	143 MCNOWN, CADE	CHI	2000	214 ABDUL-JABBAR, KARIM	MIA	3860	231 BROWN, GARY	NYG	2230	260 HOLMES, DARICK	IND	1390
15 STOYANOVICH, PETE	KC	2430	115 GREEN, TRENT	STL	4320	144 DETMER, TY	CLE	1990	215 DUNN, WARRICK	TB	3850	232 WARREN, CHRIS	DAL	2190	261 JOHNSON, LEON	NYJ	1290
16 VANDERJAGT, MIKE	IND	2420	116 BANKS, TONY	BAL	4290	145 KING, SHAUN	TB	1600	216 SMITH, ANTOUAIN	BUF	3830	233 JAMES, EDDGERRIN	IND	2000	262 MITCHELL, BRIAN	WAS	1280
17 PETERSON, TODD	SEA	2420	117 AIKMAN, TROY	DAL	4180	146 BONO, STEVE	CAR	1540	217 MURRELL, ADRIAN	ARZ	3690	234 WILLIAMS, RICKY	NO	2000	263 VARDELL, TOMMY	DET	1260
18 JOHNSON, NORM	PIT	2420	118 JOHNSON, BRAD	WAS	3870	147 TOMCZAK, MIKE	PIT	1240				235 HOARD, LEROY	MIN	2000	264 HOLCOMBE, ROBERT	STL	1250
19 RICHEY, WADE	SF	2400	119 FLUTIE, DOUG	BUF	3710	148 WUERFFEL, DANNY	NO	1230				236 HARRIS, RAYMONT	GB	1990	265 ZELLARS, RAY	NO	1230
20 HANSON, JASON	DET	2350	120 COLLINS, KERRY	NYG	3560	149 JOHNSON, ROB	BUF	1140				237 LEE, AMP	STL	1960	266 BIAKABUTUKA, TIM	CAR	1190
21 STOVER, MATT	BAL	2240	121 BATCHEL, CHARLIE	DET	3540	150 PEDERSON, DOUG	PHI	1020				238 CENTERS, LARRY	ARZ	1930	267 DAVIS, STEPHEN	WAS	1020
22 DALUISO, BRAD	NYG	2190	122 HARBAUGH, JIM	SD	3420	151 FOLEY, GLENN	SEA	1020				239 SMITH, LAMAR	NO	1930	268 JERVEY, TRAVIS	SF	1000
23 BONIOL, CHRIS	PHI	2140	123 MOON, WARREN	KC	3250	152 HOBERT, BILLY JOE	NO	1000				240 STEWART, JAMES T	JAC	1900	269 SHAW, SEDRICK	CLE	1000
24 PELFREY, DOUG	CIN	2060	124 O'DONNELL, NEIL	N/A	3160							241 KIRBY, TERRY	CLE	1890	270 WHEATLEY, TYRONE	MIA	1000
25 BRIEN, DOUG	NO	2040	125 BLAKE, JEFF	CIN	3140							242 ANDERS, KIMBLE	KC	1860	271 BYNER, EARNEST	BAL	1000
26 HUSTED, MICHAEL	OAK	2000	126 KITNA, JON	SEA	3000							243 BARBER, TIKI	NYG	1820	272 GREEN, AHMAN	SEA	1000
27 JAEGER, JEFF	CHI	1970	127 MITCHELL, SCOTT	BAL	2880							244 WAY, CHARLES	NYG	1790	273 RHETT, ERIC	BAL	1000
28 CARNEY, JOHN	SD	1870	128 KRAMER, ERIK	CHI	2770							245 BENNETT, EDGAR	CHI	1740	274 THOMAS, RODNEY	TEN	1000
29 DAVIS, GREG	N/A	1790	129 BEUERLEIN, STEVE	CAR	2750							246 ENIS, CURTIS	CHI	1680	275 LOVILLE, DEREK	DEN	1000
30 MEDNEY, JOE	ARZ	1630															
31 BLANTON, SCOTT	N/A	1630															
32 DAWSON, PHIL	CLE	1000															
33 GEORGE, MATT	TB	1000															

The player's team designation is based on his team as of April 28, 1999.
N/A signifies player was not with a team as of April 28, 1999.

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LINEUP

◆ Starting lineup consists of:

- 3-Kickers
- 3-Quarterbacks
- 6-Running Backs
- 2-Tight Ends
- 6-Wide Receivers
- 2-Defense/Special Teams

- ◆ Starting lineup value cannot exceed \$60,000,000.
- ◆ The bench consists of any 11 players and/or defense/special teams. They are your backups and may be placed onto your starting lineup for any reason (injury, poor performance, etc.)
- ◆ Value cap and position distribution rules do not apply for the bench, but do apply when switched onto the starting lineup.
- ◆ Unlisted players have a value of \$1,000,000. They must be placed on the bench until September 18th.

LEAGUES

- ◆ Leagues are formed on a first-come, first-served basis.
- ◆ 25 teams form a league.
- ◆ All teams compete for the overall grand prize.
- ◆ Teams may have many of the same players, but no two teams with the same roster will be in the same league.
- ◆ Play in the same league with your friends. For details visit our Internet site at <http://fantasyfootball.msnbc.com> or call 1-888-676-2248.

STANDINGS

- ◆ Receive a four-page report weekly or bi-weekly. You automatically receive bi-weekly standings with your entry fee. (First standings mailed September 22nd.)
- ◆ Bi-weekly standings include the lineup changes of the 25 teams in your league. Know what you are competing against!
- ◆ Updated league rosters and top 5 overall sent the weeks of September 27th and November 1st.
- ◆ \$10 for standings to be mailed to a second address.
- ◆ \$10 per address per team for standings to be mailed weekly rather than bi-weekly.
- ◆ Standings are also available via the Internet. Call for details.
- ◆ Fax service available. Call 1-888-676-2248 for details.

LINEUP CHANGES

- ◆ To make lineup changes, a toll-free number and an account number will be provided, or you may make them via the Internet.
- ◆ The deadline for weekly lineup changes is Saturday at 9 PM CT for Sunday and Monday games, or by 9 PM CT the night before any other game (changes for Thursday games must be made by 9 PM Wednesday night). The first roster change deadline is Saturday, September 18th.
- ◆ The fees for lineup changes are as follows:
Any player move before the season starts (unlimited)\$1 each
Bench Switch (unlimited)\$2 each
New Player Purchase (limit 10)\$5 each
Bye Week Bench Switch (in or out)\$1 each

Sign up, get results, and make changes via the Internet at:
<http://fantasyfootball.msnbc.com>

ADDITIONAL RULES

- ◆ For Canadian entries, please add \$15 to your entry fee to cover additional mailing costs. All dollar amounts indicated are payable in U.S. dollars.
- ◆ Player changes cannot be made until your team has been entered into the computer database. Phone and Internet entries are entered immediately upon receipt. Mailed and faxed teams will be entered within five working days of receipt.
- ◆ Not responsible for lost, late, stolen or misdirected entries or player changes.
- ◆ Our toll line is 314-991-1511. Our fax number is 314-991-1564.
- ◆ *MSNBC Sports Fantasy Football* is subject to the complete official rules which are at <http://fantasyfootball.msnbc.com> and contained in the Welcome Kit. By participating in *MSNBC Sports Fantasy Football*, you agree to abide to the terms of the complete official rules and by the decisions of the judges which are final on all matters pertaining to the Contest.
- ◆ *MSNBC Sports Fantasy Football* is not affiliated in any way with the National Football League.
- ◆ Contest is open only to legal residents of the United States and Canada, 18 years of age or older. Void where prohibited by law.
- ◆ Employees of Microsoft Corporation, MSNBC, CDM and their affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies and immediate family members of each are not eligible.

The deadline for weekly lineup changes is Saturday at 9 PM Central Time for Sunday and Monday games, or by 9 PM Central Time the night before any other game.

Entries must be phoned or faxed by 9 PM Central Time Saturday, Sept. 11, 1999.
Mailed entries must be postmarked by Sept. 11th and received by Sept. 16, 1999.

Call 1-888-676-2248 Now!
Commissioners Are Standing By To Answer Your Questions And Enter Your Team.

To pay with check or money order, mail your entry and payment to:
MSNBC Sports Fantasy Football/CDM, Inc.
11756 Borman Drive, Suite 220
St. Louis, MO 63146-4133



Complete this entry form and enter your team by calling 1-888-676-2248 from 9 AM to 9 PM CT Monday-Sunday or by fax (314) 991-1564 anytime.

Only players listed here can be in your starting lineup for Week 1.

STARTING LINEUP

POS	NUM	PLAYER	VALUE
K			
K			
K			
QB			
QB			
QB			
RB			
RB			
RB			
RB			
RB			
TE			
TE			
WR			
WR			
WR			
WR			
WR			
DEF/SP			
DEF/SP			

STARTING LINEUP VALUE

\$ _____
(cannot exceed \$60,000,000)

BENCH

NUM	PLAYER	VALUE
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		

TEAM OWNER INFORMATION

PRE-COL

Name _____

Team Name _____

Address _____

City _____ St. _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

MC/VISA/DISC _____

Expires _____

First Entry Fee \$ _____

Add'l Entries Qty _____ @ _____ = _____

Add'l Address Qty _____ @ \$10.00 = _____

Weekly Reports Qty _____ @ \$10.00 = _____

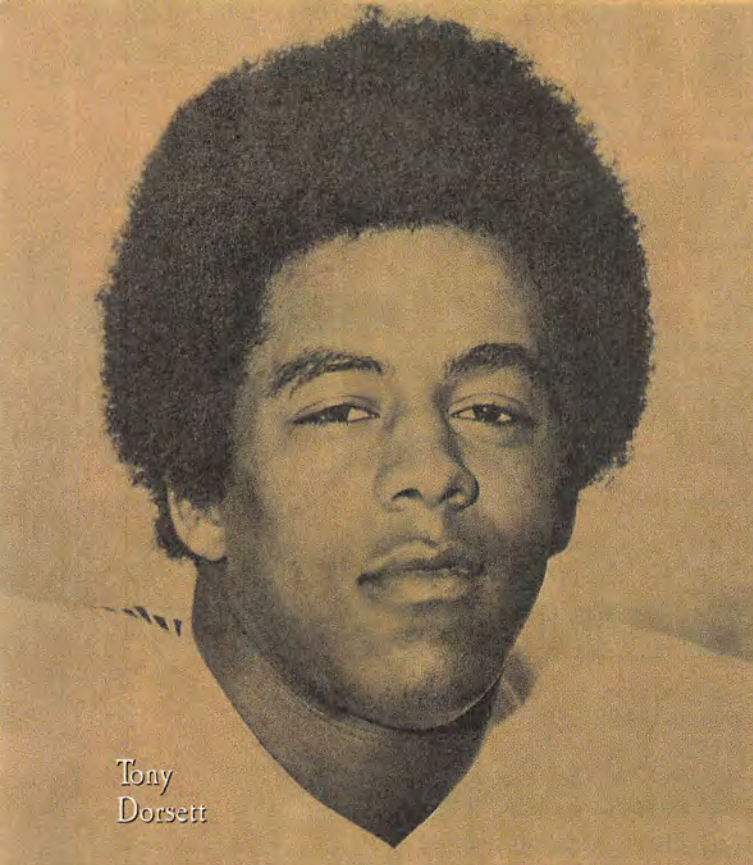
TOTAL PAYMENT _____

Have you played a CDM game before? _____

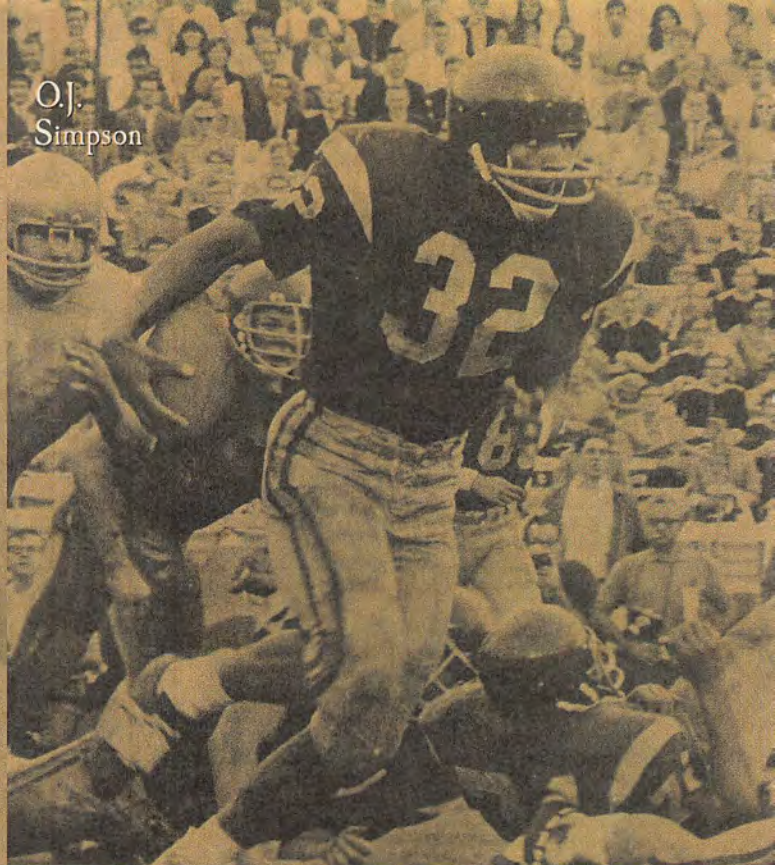
CDM
Fantasy Sports
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Unlisted players must be placed on the bench until Week 2. Unlisted player's value is \$1,000,000.

TIGHT ENDS			WIDE RECEIVERS			WIDE RECEIVERS (cont)			WIDE RECEIVERS (cont)			DEFENSE/SPECIAL TEAMS		
NO	PLAYER	TM VAL	NO	PLAYER	TM VAL	NO	PLAYER	TM VAL	NO	PLAYER	TM VAL	NO	TEAM	VAL
401	SHARPE, SHANNON	DEN 2550	501	MOSS, RANDY	MIN 4600	533	EMANUEL, BERT	TB 2240	565	BROOKS, ROBERT	GB 1620	801	GREEN BAY	3940
402	COATES, BEN	NE 1970	502	FREEMAN, ANTONIO	GB 3900	534	JACKSON, MICHAEL	BAL 2180	566	JOHNSON, KEVIN	CLE 1600	802	DALLAS	3630
403	WALLS, WESLEY	CAR 1760	503	SMITH, JIMMY	JAC 3410	535	SHEPHERD, LESLIE	CLE 2150	567	PRICE, PEERLESS	BUF 1600	803	DENVER	3400
404	WYCHECK, FRANK	TEN 1750	504	CARTER, CRIS	MIN 3400	536	CONWAY, CURTIS	CHI 2150	568	DAVIS, WILLIE	TEN 1480	804	NY GIANTS	3240
405	ALEXANDER, STEPHEN	WAS 1630	505	BROWN, TIM	OAK 3300	537	GLENN, TERRY	NE 2140	569	EARLY, QUINN	BUF 1450	805	SAN FRANCISCO	3040
406	JONES, FREDDIE	SD 1610	506	GALLOWAY, JOEY	SEA 3300	538	BRUCE, ISAAC	STL 2120	570	DAVIS, BILLY	DAL 1450	806	MIAMI	2870
407	DUDLEY, RICKY	OAK 1580	507	MOORE, HERMAN	DET 3210	539	CROWLEY, GERMANE	DET 2100	571	HILLIARD, IKE	NYG 1420	807	PITTSBURGH	2750
408	GONZALEZ, TONY	KC 1470	508	MARTIN, TONY	MIA 3210	540	JEFFERSON, SHAWN	NE 2070	572	MICKENS, TERRY	OAK 1360	808	KANSAS CITY	2600
409	CLELAND, CAMERON	NO 1400	509	JOHNSON, KEYSHAWN	NYJ 3160	541	ISMAL, RAGHIB	DAL 2070	573	PENN, CHRIS	CHI 1360	809	SEATTLE	2420
410	CHMURA, MARK	GB 1250	510	MOORE, ROB	ARZ 3130	542	POOLE, KEITH	NO 2030	574	JEFFERS, PATRICK	CAR 1350	810	NEW ENGLAND	2350
411	MOORE, DAVE	TB 1220	511	OWENS, TERRELL	SF 3020	543	RISON, ANDRE	KC 2020	575	JONES, CHARLIE	SD 1320	811	NY JETS	2310
412	GLOVER, ANDREW	MIN 1200	512	MATHIS, TERENCE	ATL 2940	544	SIMMONS, TONY	NE 2010	576	WARD, DEDRIC	NYJ 1320	812	TAMPA BAY	2250
413	SANTIAGO, OJ	ATL 1160	513	ALEXANDER, DERRICK	KC 2910	545	HOLT, TORRY	STL 2000	577	CARRIER, MARK J	CAR 1310	813	MINNESOTA	2210
414	POLLARD, MARCUS	IND 1120	514	PICKENS, CARL	CIN 2850	546	BOSTON, DAVID	ARZ 2000	578	KENNISON, EDDIE	NO 1300	814	CAROLINA	2170
415	DRAYTON, TROY	MIA 1110	515	MCCARDLE, KEENAN	JAC 2830	547	EDWARDS, TROY	PIT 2000	579	THOMAS, LAMAR	MIA 1290	815	JACKSONVILLE	2140
416	GREEN, ERIC	NYJ 1100	516	MCDUFFIE, O.J.	MIA 2780	548	DAWKINS, SEAN	SEA 1990	580	BROWN, TROY	NE 1280	816	WASHINGTON	2090
417	CLARK, GREG	SF 1080	517	IRVIN, MICHAEL	DAL 2770	549	ENGRAM, BOBBY	CHI 1980	581	METCALF, ERIC	ARZ 1230	817	OAKLAND	2030
418	MCGEE, TONY	CIN 1060	518	RICE, JERRY	SF 2770	550	RICKS, MIKHAEL	SD 1930	582	DYSON, KEVIN	TEN 1170	818	TENNESSEE	1990
419	MITCHELL, PETE	NYG 1050	519	SMITH, ROD	DEN 2740	551	PATTON, JEROME	IND 1920	583	GREEN, JACQUEZ	TB 1150	819	ATLANTA	1940
420	BJOHNSON, ERIC	DAL 1030	520	SANDERS, FRANK	ARZ 2720	552	PROEHL, RICKY	STL 1870	584	TURNER, FLOYD	BAL 1150	820	NEW ORLEANS	1770
421	DAVIS, TYRONE	GB 1000	521	CHREBET, WAYNE	NYJ 2700	553	GADSDEN, ORONDE	MIA 1840	585	MCKNIGHT, JAMES	SEA 1110	821	BUFFALO	1730
422	DILGER, KEN	IND 1000	522	MORTON, JOHNNIE	DET 2610	554	STOKES, J.J.	SF 1840	586	SANDERS, CHRIS	TEN 1090	822	DETROIT	1600
423	ASHER, JAMIE	PHI 1000	523	MCCAFFREY, ED	DEN 2580	555	THIGPEN, YANCEY	TEN 1840	587	CONNELL, ALBERT	WAS 1080	823	BALTIMORE	1480
424	HARRIS, JACKIE	TEN 1000	524	HARRISON, MARVIN	IND 2490	556	HASTINGS, ANDRE	NO 1830	588	STILL, BRYAN	SD 1070	824	CHICAGO	1410
425	BRADY, KYLE	JAC 1000	525	REED, ANDRE	BUF 2480	557	MUHAMMAD, MURSHIN	CAR 1820	589	WILLIAMS, KARL	TB 1050	825	SAN DIEGO	1330
426	JOHNSON, LONNIE	KC 1000	526	MOULDS, ERIC	BUF 2410	558	SMALL, TORRANCE	PHI 1800	590	WARD, HINES	PIT 1000	826	PHILADELPHIA	1260
427	MAYES, ALONZO	CHI 1000	527	REED, JAKE	MIN 2400	559	WESTBROOK, MICHAEL	WAS 1800	591	MILLS, ERNIE	DAL 1000	827	INDIANAPOLIS	1120
428	FAURIA, CHRISTIAN	SEA 1000	528	JETT, JAMES	OAK 2390	560	PRITCHARD, MIKE	SEA 1800	592	HILL, RANDAL	NO 1000	828	ARIZONA	1000
429	SMITH, IRV	CLE 1000	529	SCOTT, DARNAY	CIN 2390	561	LEWIS, JERMAINE	BAL 1750	593	BLACKWELL, WILL	PIT 1000	829	ST LOUIS	1000
430	MCWILLIAMS, JOHNNY	ARZ 1000	530	CALLOWAY, CHRIS	ATL 2350	562	SCHROEDER, BILL	GB 1720	594	MAYES, DERRICK	GB 1000	830	CINCINNATI	1000
431	LAFLAUR, DAVID	DAL 1000	531	ANTHONY, REIDEL	TB 2330	563	GRAHAM, JEFF	SD 1720	595	CARRUTH, RAE	CAR 1000	831	CLEVELAND	1000
432	BRUENER, MARK	PIT 1000	532	JOHNSON, CHARLES	PHI 2310	564	HAWKINS, COURTNEY	PIT 1700	596	DWIGHT, TIM	ATL 1000			



Tony
Dorsett



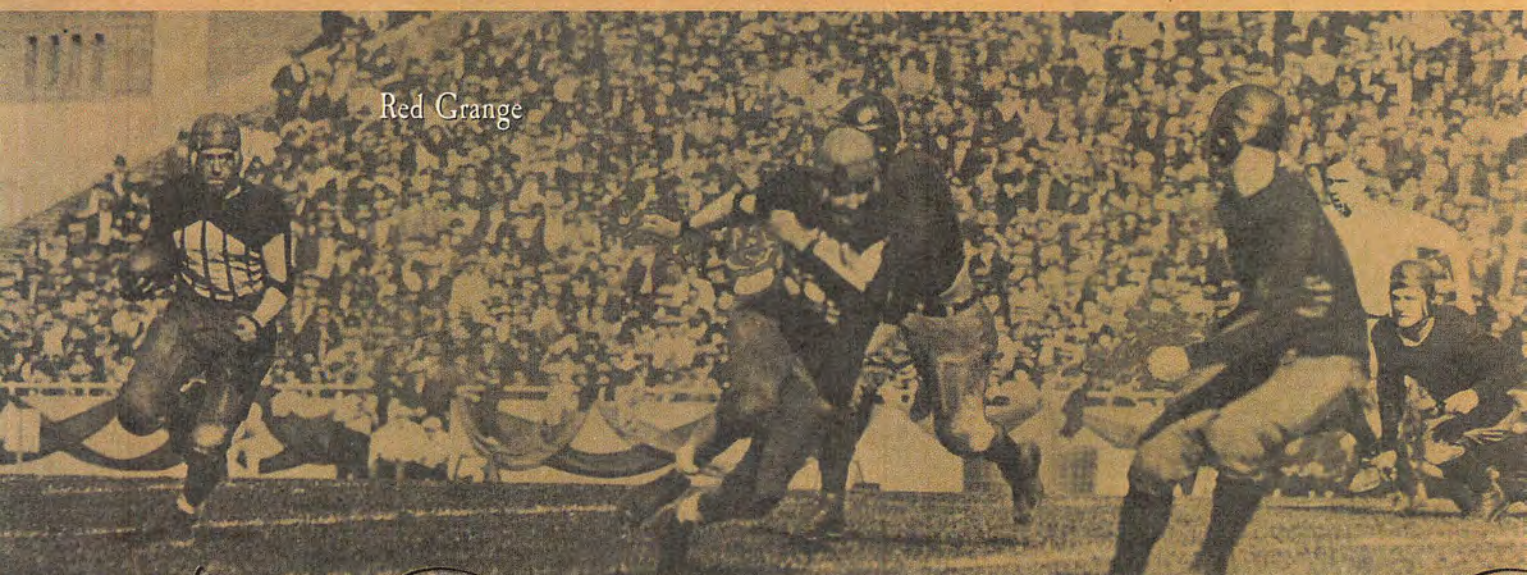
O.J.
Simpson

John Heisman, the man for whom the trophy given annually to college football's best is named and one of the greatest coaches in the sport's history, used to greet his charges each year with the same warning.

Holding a football aloft, Heisman would say: "What is it? It's a prolate spheroid. It's an elongated sphere. The outer leathern casing is drawn tightly over a somewhat smaller rubber tubing. It's a football. You will do better to

have died as a small boy than fumble it."

Rather hard stuff, don't you think? But maybe not. The gravity of Heisman's speech remains in full force today—even more so. As the century draws to a close, college football is more than just a Saturday diversion. It is a full-fledged athletic theology that grips millions of frenzied fans in four months of weekly revival meetings that have no peers. College football is America's



Red Grange

"RED" GRANGE STARTS FOR THE GOAL LINE ILLINOIS 39 1921

A Century of C

Take a trip back through the 1900s with us, charting this grand

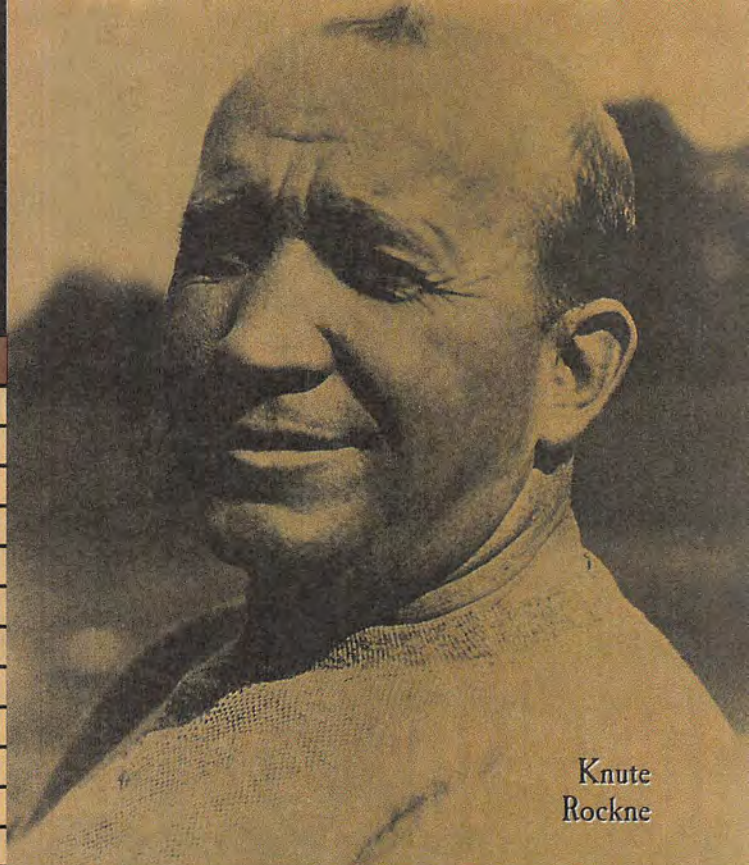
The All-Century Team

OFFENSE

End	Bennie Oosterbaan, Michigan
Line	Wilbur "Fats" Henry, Washington & Jefferson
Line	Dave Rimington, Nebraska
Line	Bill Fralic, Pittsburgh
Line	Orlando Pace, Ohio State
Line	Tony Boselli, Southern California
Tight End	Keith Jackson, Oklahoma
End	Johnny Rodgers, Nebraska
Quarterback	Sammy Baugh, Texas Christian
Running Back	Red Grange, Illinois
Running Back	O.J. Simpson, Southern California
Running Back	Tony Dorsett, Pittsburgh

sporting pageant, and it has been such for 130 years.

So, take a trip back through the 1900s with us, charting this grand spectacle's growth and development. The following snapshots of the century's decades reflect how the game has changed. Schools that were powers in the 1910s are no longer factors on the national scene. Two-way stars have given way to specialists. Styles of play have come and gone. But one thing remains:



Knute Rockne

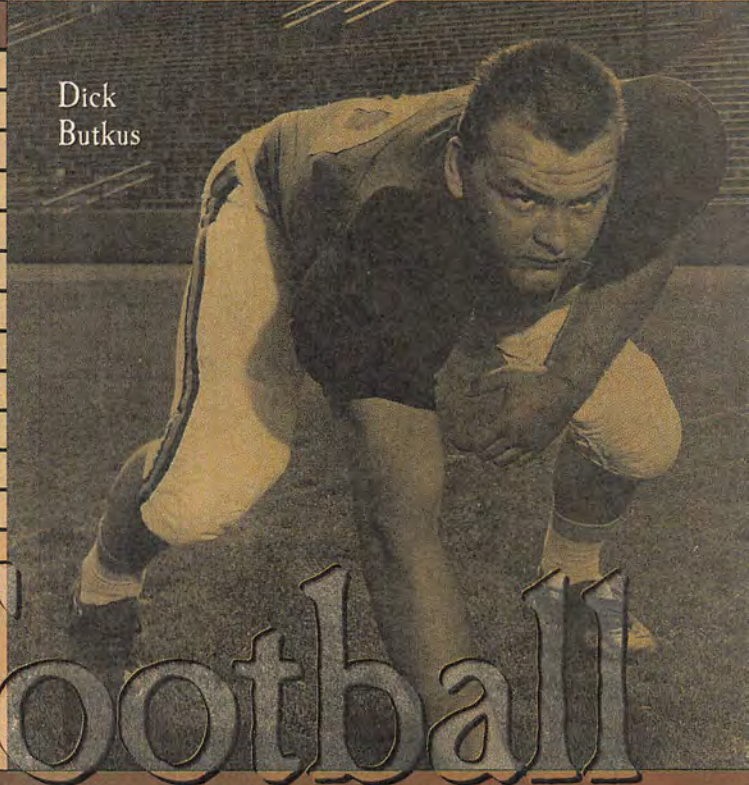
College football is more than a game. Heisman may have seemed out of line with his "died as a small boy" comment, but he was right. For three hours every Saturday, there is nothing more important than football.

A huge debt of gratitude is owed to Kent Stephens, archivist at the College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, Indiana. Without his help, putting together the all-decade teams and all-century unit would have been impossible.

DEFENSE

Line	Ted Hendricks, Miami
Line	Randy White, Maryland
Line	Bronko Nagurski, Minnesota
Line	Hugh Green, Pittsburgh
Linebacker	Dick Butkus, Illinois
Linebacker	Jerry Robinson, UCLA
Linebacker	Randy Gradishar, Ohio State
Back	Jack Tatum, Ohio State
Back	Ken Easley, UCLA
Back	Deion Sanders, Florida State
Back	Jim Thorpe, Carlisle
Coach	Knute Rockne, Notre Dame

Dick Butkus



College Football

spectacle's growth and development...

By Michael Bradley

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sportsbook in this issue or any other, bearing the same name.

All-Decade Teams

1900-1909

End	Thomas Shevlin, Yale
End	Dave Campbell, Harvard
Line	Hamilton Fish, Harvard
Line	Jim Hogan, Yale
Line	Dutch Goebel, Yale
Line	Albert Benbrook, Michigan
Line	John DeWitt, Princeton
Back	Walter Eckersall, Chicago
Back	Ted Coy, Yale
Back	Willie Heston, Michigan
Back	Bill Hollenback, Pennsylvania
Coach	Fielding Yost, Michigan

1910-1919

End	Paul Robeson, Rutgers
End	Guy Chamberlain, Nebraska
Line	Wilbur "Fats" Henry, Washington & Jefferson
Line	Stan Pennock, Harvard
Line	Joe Alexander, Syracuse
Line	Henry Ketcham, Yale
Line	Robert Peck, Pittsburgh
Back	Jim Thorpe, Carlisle
Back	Chic Harley, Ohio State
Back	Bo McMillin, Centre
Back	Eddie Mahan, Harvard
Coach	Pop Warner, Carlisle

1900-1909

The Ivies dominated play during the century's first decade, with few exceptions. One was Michigan's "Point a Minute" steamroller, which outscored opponents 2,819-48 from 1901-05 and lost only once, to Amos Alonzo Stagg's Chicago team, 2-0, in the last game of '05. For all of Michigan's breathtaking speed and efficiency, football remained a brutal game, so much so that in 1905, president Theodore Roosevelt summoned representatives from Harvard, Yale and Princeton to the White House and warned them that the violence must end, or the game will be banned. A year later, a set of rules was implemented that established, among other things, a neutral zone at the line of scrimmage and a disqualification penalty for any player who fights.

In 1910, more rough stuff was outlawed, including the flying tackle. Innovations abounded. Pop Warner introduced the hidden-ball trick. Stagg came up with the Statue of Liberty play. Coach Henry Williams devised the Minnesota shift, which allowed his team to outflank its opponent just before the snap. But the biggest change in the game came in 1906, when the forward pass was legalized. Although many believed Notre Dame had the first aerial circus, thanks to its landmark 1913 win at Army, the Irish had wide-open forefathers at St. Louis University, where, in 1906, coach Eddie Cochems unleashed passer Brad Robinson and end Jack Schneider on an unsuspecting world.

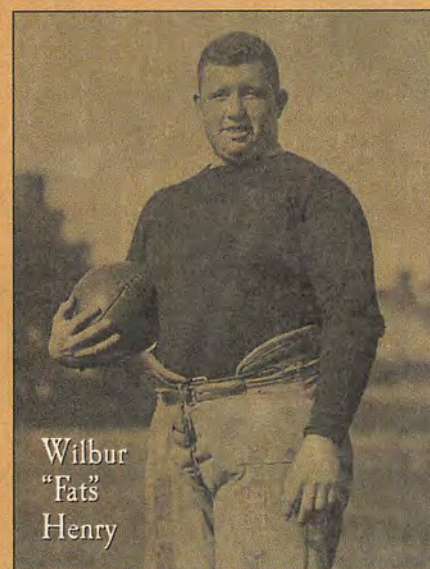
1910-1919

By the time this decade was over, college football had moved from the realm of the violent and unruly to a sport that was embraced across the country. As the attention of the nation began to spread from the Ivies and their brethren to larger schools, stars began to emerge, both on the sidelines and the field.

Perhaps the most dramatic entrance onto the scene was made by Notre Dame, which in 1913 used the Gus Dorais-to-Knute Rockne passing combination to upset mighty Army at West Point, 35-13, thereby launching decades of magical moments. But there were other new champions. Cornell ended Harvard's reign over the football world with a 10-0 victory in 1915, thanks to Charlie Barrett and Fritz Shiverick. Nebraska and Oklahoma posted undefeated records that same year, while the great Pop Warner began a three-year run at Pittsburgh that didn't include a loss. In the Midwest, glib Bob Zuppke, who fashioned statements like "All quitters are good losers" and "I don't look for tackles, I listen for them" brought Illinois to the limelight with a 14-9 win over mighty Minnesota in 1916. Down South, Georgia Tech emerged as a powerhouse, under John Heisman and in 1916 obliterated helpless Cumberland, 222-0.

But the biggest story of the decade came in central Pennsylvania, where Warner's Carlisle teams

brought notice to the tiny college. Leading the way was the peerless Jim Thorpe, arguably the century's greatest athlete and one of the most devastating runners in college football history. With Thorpe leading the way, Carlisle shocked Harvard (1911) and Army (1912), carving a special niche for itself in the game's history.



Milestones

California, Oregon, Oregon State and Washington form precursor to the Pac-10, joining the Southwest Conference.

A field goal's value drops from four to three points.

Michigan drubs Stanford, 49-0 in the first-ever Rose Bowl game.

The length of the football field is reduced to 100 yards, with a 10-yard end zone beyond each goal line.

A code of rules is established that brings football away from its rugby roots.

Illinois hosts the first Homecoming game and whips Chicago, 3-0, before the Olde Grads.

1900 1902 1906 1909 1910 1912 1916

A Century of College Football

All-Decade Teams

1920-1929

End	Bennie Oosterbaan, Michigan
End	Brick Muller, California
Line	Bronko Nagurski, Minnesota
Line	Ed Weir, Nebraska
Line	Ed Garbisch, Washington & Jefferson/Army
Line	Herman Hickman, Tennessee
Line	Ben Ticknor, Harvard
Back	Red Grange, Illinois
Back	Benny Friedman, Michigan
Back	Ernie Nevers, Stanford
Back	Chris Cagle, Army
Coach	Knute Rockne, Notre Dame

1930-1939

End	Don Hutson, Alabama
End	Larry Kelley, Yale
Line	Ed Widseth, Minnesota
Line	Nick Drahos, Cornell
Line	Bob Suffridge, Tennessee
Line	Alex Wojciehowicz, Fordham
Line	Bill Corbus, Stanford
Back	Sammy Baugh, Texas Christian
Back	Tom Harmon, Michigan
Back	Nile Kinnick, Iowa
Back	Marshall Goldberg, Pittsburgh
Coach	Bernie Bierman, Minnesota

1920-1929

The 1920s belonged to a back and a team. The back was the incomparable Red Grange, and the team was Notre Dame, which under Knute Rockne established itself as the nation's finest. Grange was a marvel, and his long, S-shaped runs devastated opponents. In 1924, he humbled a great Michigan team, scoring five times on five runs in a 39-14 rout. After the game, the Michigan Daily groused, "All Red Grange can do is run." Zuppke's retort was a killer: "And all Galli-Curci can do is sing," referring to the great tenor.

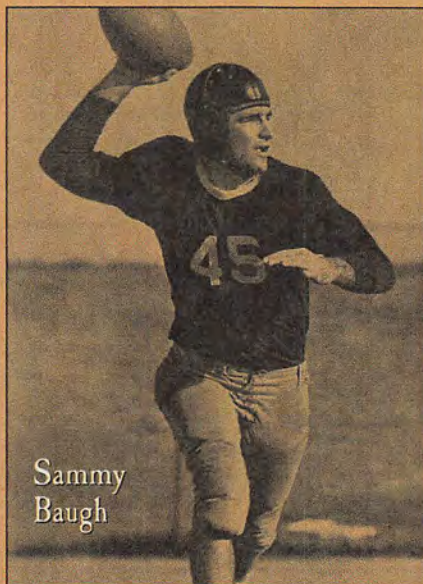
While Zuppke was marching to immortality, ND's Four Horsemen were reserving some space of their own in football's Valhalla. Grantland Rice named the great Irish backfield—Jim Crowley, Elmer Layden, Harry Stuhldreher and Don Miller—after the riders of the Apocalypse, and many a Notre Dame foe felt their wrath. Playing behind the "Seven Mules", the Horsemen led Notre Dame to the 1925 Rose Bowl, where they used three Layden touchdowns to vanquish Ernie Nevers and a great Stanford team.

Though Grange had trashed Michigan in '24, the 1925 Wolverines were one of the school's best-ever teams, thanks to legendary end Bennie Oosterbaan and passer Benny Friedman. Other familiar names stepped to the fore during this decade. Alabama, first under Wallace Wade, and Howard Jones' USC teams became national powerhouses. In 1926, Army and mighty Navy played to a 21-21 tie before a rowdy throng of 110,000 in Chicago. But the upset of the decade belonged to Bo McMillin and dinky Centre College, of Danville, Kentucky, which whipped

Harvard, 6-0, in 1921. It is still considered one of the biggest surprises of all-time.

1930-1939

The nation may have been mired in an economic morass during the 1930s, but college football was



doing just fine, thank you. Although the professional game was growing in stature, it was still dwarfed by its amateur counterpart. And why not? There were heroes and powerhouses across the land.

In the mid-1930s, however, none was more potent than Bernie Bierman's Minnesota Gophers, who won three straight national championships (1934-36), the last one with future Oklahoma coach Bud Wilkinson at quarterback. The Thirties featured an explosion of talent at the skill positions, with stars like Iowa's Nile Kinnick, Michigan's Tom Harmon, Colorado's Whizzer White and TCU's Sammy Baugh leading the way.

There were also some memorable games, one of which took place in the 1934 Rose Bowl, when Stanford took on lightly-regarded Columbia. Experts expected a wipeout, and as the Lions took the soggy turf, fans were heard chanting, "We want Michigan!" As it turned out, the Indians might have preferred the Wolverines. In the second quarter of a 0-0 game, coach Lou Little called for the KF-79 play, and Al Barabas splashed 82 yards for the game's only touchdown.

If that was surprising, the series between Fordham and Pittsburgh was surreal. From 1935-37, the teams met three times, with nary a point scored. There was no shortage of fireworks when Chicago's Jay Berwanger handled the ball. The great Maroon back closed his career in 1935 by scoring the winning touchdown against Illinois. Not long after, he won the first Heisman Trophy as the nation's top player. Berwanger was also the top pick in the first-ever NFL draft (by the Eagles) but spurned the pros for a successful business career.

Milestones

The first College All-Star game is played at Soldier Field. A team of college stars battles defending NFL champ Chicago to a scoreless tie.

Princeton's "Tiger Team of Destiny" upsets heavily-favored host Chicago.

Notre Dame coach Knute Rockne dies in a plane crash.

Goal posts are moved to the back of the end zone, 10 yards from the goal line.

Notre Dame legend George Gipp is named all-America but dies of pneumonia.

Chicago's Jay Berwanger wins the first Heisman Trophy.

1920 1922 1927 1930 1931 1934 1935 1940

A Century of College Football

All-Decade Teams

1940-1949

End	Leon Hart, Notre Dame
End	Barney Poole, Army/Mississippi
Line	George Connor, Holy Cross/Notre Dame
Line	Leo Nomellini, Minnesota
Line	Chuck Bednarik, Pennsylvania
Line	Dick Wildung, Minnesota
Line	Alex Agase, Illinois/Purdue
Back	Glenn Davis, Army
Back	Doak Walker, Southern Methodist
Back	Johnny Lujack, Notre Dame
Back	Charlie Justice, North Carolina
Coach	Frank Leahy, Notre Dame

1950-1959

End	Ron Kramer, Michigan
End	Willie Davis, Grambling
Line	Alex Karras, Iowa
Line	Les Richter, California
Line	Jim Parker, Ohio State
Line	Jim Weatherall, Oklahoma
Line	Bob Ward, Maryland
Back	Jim Brown, Syracuse
Back	Billy Cannon, Louisiana State
Back	Howard Cassady, Ohio State
Back	Alan Ameche, Wisconsin
Coach	Bud Wilkinson, Oklahoma

1940-1949

This decade began with the resurrection of the T formation, which was considered a dinosaur but served Stanford and its coach, Clark Shaughnessy, quite well. With deceptive Frankie Albert at quarterback, the Indians rolled through the 1940 season undefeated and then whipped Nebraska in the Rose Bowl to finish 10-0. The "T" spread throughout the country—again, complete with the mandatory innovations, like Don Faurot's "split T" at Missouri.

By mid-decade, however, tactics weren't capturing headlines. Army was. While World War II raged in Europe and the Pacific, the Cadet ranks swelled with eager recruits, many of whom had considerable gridiron talent. The best, of course, were Doc "Mr. Inside" Blanchard and Glenn "Mr. Outside" Davis, as lethal a backfield tandem as had ever been assembled. With Blanchard and Davis leading the way, Red Blaik's Army teams rolled to perfect seasons in 1944 and '45, allowing a total of 68 points during the two years and beating Notre Dame by a combined score of 107-0.

In '46, the war was over, and the nation's schools were re-stocked with talent. Army was still mighty, but the Irish were undefeated, too, when the teams met in Yankee Stadium for the first-ever "Game of the Century." Notre Dame back Johnny Lujack's dramatic open-field tackle of Doc Blanchard preserved a 0-0 tie that brought little satisfaction to the 74,000 in attendance. The tie ended Army's dominance. Notre Dame went on to win the 1946 national title and then won championships in 1947 and '49. Stars like Lujack, end Leon Hart and All-America guard Bill Fischer were so dominant even the doomsaying Leahy had to smile.

1950-1959

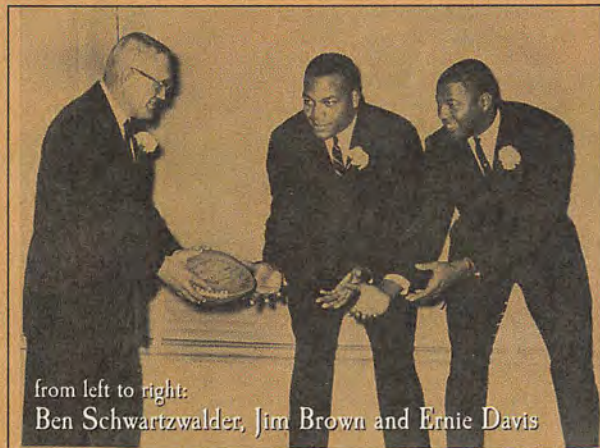
While college football struggled with the idea of a two-platoon game during this decade—first it was allowed, then outlawed, then later allowed in 1963—Oklahoma didn't care how many players it was permitted to use. The Sooners just beat everybody. From 1952-57, coach Bud Wilkinson's team dominated the landscape, winning a remarkable 47 games in a row and capturing two national championships. Leading the way was an impressive collection of heroes that included star backs Billy Vessels and Tommy McDonald and linemen Jim Weatherall and Jerry Tubbs. But even dynasties have to end, and Oklahoma's was no exception. Dick Lynch's end run in 1957 gave Notre Dame a 7-0 win over the Sooners.

Another giant of the '50s was Michigan State, which had been a laughingstock for years but developed into one of the nation's mightiest teams and regularly gave the Irish and hated rival Michigan beatings. Two coaches, Biggie Munn and Duffy Daugherty, assembled the Green machine and won the 1952 national title. Other powers of the decade included UCLA, directed by colorful Red Sanders, and Ohio State, which rampaged through the Midwest under the direction of coach Woody Hayes.

Hayes, a military historian who believed greatly in the

power of the infantry, roughed up opponents with a split-T attack that largely eschewed the pass. But Hayes' philosophy was not the norm. The 1950s were a time of the triple-threat (run, pass or pitch) tailback, with stars like George Shaw of Oregon, TCU's Jim Swink, Navy's George Welsh and a pair of Irish stars, Ralph Guglielmi and Paul Hornung.

Hornung, South Bend's "Golden Boy" starred at ND when the Irish fortunes were not quite at their peak. Nonetheless, he won the 1956 Heisman, becoming the first (and only) winner from a losing team. That same year, the godfathers of college football de-emphasized football and formed the Ivy League, outlawing the bestowing of scholarships and ending spring practice.



from left to right:
Ben Schwartzwalder, Jim Brown and Ernie Davis

Milestones

The NCAA approves Saturday college football telecasts but limits regions to just one game per week.

Notre Dame tackle George Connor wins the first Outland Award as the nation's top interior lineman.

The two-point conversion is introduced.

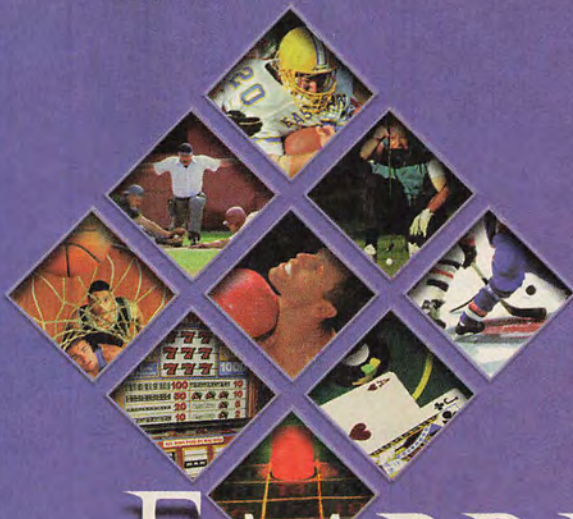
Maryland plays Pennsylvania in the first televised college game.

The Ivy League is formed as the nation's early powers de-emphasize football.

Rose Bowl is moved to Durham for fear of Japanese attack in Pasadena. Oregon State beats host Duke, 20-16.

1940 1942 1946 1950 1951 1956 1958 1960

A Century of College Football



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All-Decade Teams

1960-1969

1970-1979

OFFENSE		DEFENSE		OFFENSE		DEFENSE	
End	Howard Twilley, Tulsa	Line	Bubba Smith, Michigan State	WR	Johnny Rodgers, Nebraska	Line	Ross Browner, Notre Dame
Line	Ron Yary, Southern California	Line	Lloyd Phillips, Arkansas	Line	John Hannah, Alabama	Line	Hugh Green, Pittsburgh
Line	Bob Brown, Nebraska	Line	Ted Hendricks, Miami	Line	Jerry Sisemore, Texas	Line	Lee Roy Selmon, Oklahoma
Line	Bobby Bell, Minnesota	Line	Jim Stillwagon, Ohio State	Line	John Hicks, Ohio State	Line	Randy White, Maryland
Line	Rick Redman, Washington	LB	Tommy Nobis, Texas	Line	Brad Budde, Southern Calif.	LB	Jerry Robinson, UCLA
Line	Ralph Neely, Oklahoma	LB	Dick Butkus, Illinois	Line	Jim Ritcher, N. Carolina St.	LB	Randy Gradishar, Ohio State
TE	Ted Kwalick, Penn State	LB	Willie Lanier, Morgan State	TE	Ken McAfee, Notre Dame	LB	Mike Singletary, Baylor
End	Otis Taylor, Prairie View A&M	DB	Jack Tatum, Ohio State	WR	Lynn Swann, Southern Calif.	DB	Ken Easley, UCLA
QB	Roger Staubach, Navy	DB	Leroy Keyes, Purdue	QB	Pat Sullivan, Auburn	DB	Dennis Thurman, S. Calif.
RB	O.J. Simpson, Southern Calif.	DB	George Webster, Michigan St.	RB	Tony Dorsett, Pittsburgh	DB	Johnnie Johnson, Texas
RB	Ernie Davis, Syracuse	DB	Johnny Roland, Missouri	RB	Archie Griffin, Ohio State	DB	Tommy Casanova, La. State
RB	Steve Owens, Oklahoma	Coach	Darrell Royal, Texas	RB	Billy Sims, Oklahoma	Coach	Paul "Bear" Bryant, Ala.

1960-1969

Although fans didn't particularly like the decision, two-platoon football returned to stay in 1963, and college football's galaxy of stars practically doubled. By the time the decade ended, the sport had turned 100 years old, and competition at the top of the charts was more fierce than ever.

In the early 1960s, however, a familiar name was missing from among the heavy hitters. Notre Dame had suffered through some horrendous seasons, culminating in a disastrous, one-win campaign in 1963. Then came the Era of Ara. Ara Parseghian was hired before the '64 campaign and nearly pulled off a miracle turnaround. If not for a second-half collapse at Southern California, the Irish would have gone from doormats to undefeated champions. Two years later, however, the Fighting Irish did sit atop the college world, despite a 10-10 tie with mighty Michigan State in yet another "Game of the Century." Though Parseghian was criticized for sitting on the ball during the game's waning moments, rather than going for the win, his strategy paid off in the long run. ND whipped USC, 51-0, in Los Angeles, to earn the championship.

Notre Dame didn't hold a monopoly on the headlines during the decade. Texas, under Darrell Royal, was even more impressive, if not as breathlessly glorified. The Longhorns won the 1963 national title and then defeated ND in the dramatic '70 Cotton Bowl to earn the 1969 championship. The Longhorns piled up yards and points in the latter part of the decade with their wishbone offense that featured three backs in an inverted V behind the signal-caller. Developed by Texas assistant Emory Bellard, the offense became the scourge of college football and dominated the offen-

sive part of the game for nearly 10 years.

While Notre Dame and Texas were riding high during the '60s, Penn State went from provincial powerhouse to national player under coach Joe Paterno. Ohio State was imposing during the second half of the decade and won the 1968 national title, thanks to stars like QB Rex Kern, fullback Jim Otis and vicious DB Jack Tatum. And, lest we forget amidst his recent legal travails, USC tailback O.J. Simpson needed only two years to establish himself as one of the greatest backs in college history.

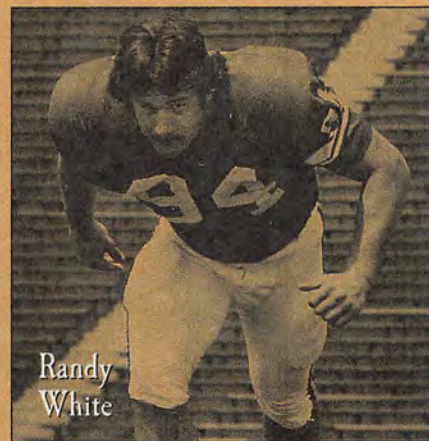
1970-1979

Powerhouses prevailed throughout the 1970s, with parity nowhere to be found. Michigan and Ohio State dominated the Big Ten. The Big Eight belonged to Nebraska and Oklahoma. Pac-10 supremacy came down to the annual USC-UCLA tilt. Alabama was practically invincible in the Southeastern Conference, with Texas equally omnipotent in the Southwest Conference. Notre Dame and Penn State, meanwhile, ruled the independents. There were few exceptions.

One was the 1976 Pittsburgh team, which rode the fleet feet of tailback Tony Dorsett to a perfect season and national title. The titans ruled for the rest of the decade. And they produced some memorable matchups. The first was arguably the most exciting college game ever. Oklahoma and Nebraska's 1971 meeting produced enough thrills and excitement for 10 games. The Cornhuskers' 35-31 win propelled them toward a second consecutive national title. Two years later, Notre Dame captured the first of its two championships during the '70s (the other came in 1977) by rallying to whip Alabama in the Sugar Bowl.

It seemed like every Michigan and Ohio State game of the decade had big implications, although neither was able to wear the nation's crown during the decade. Southern California and 'Bama, however, each won or shared three championships and split the '78 treasure.

The ground assault was the preferred method of travel during the Disco era, with the wishbone and other option incarnations dominant among offensive minds. As one might imagine, the landscape was filled with talented running backs. Leading the way was Dorsett, but Ohio State's Archie Griffin, the only player ever to win two Heisman Trophies, close behind. Oklahoma's Greg Pruitt, Joe Washington and Billy Sims were all dynamic, as were USC tailbacks Anthony Davis, Ricky Bell and Charles White.



Milestones

Nebraska beats Oklahoma, 35-31, in what is widely believed to be the greatest game in college football history.

The Associated Press changes its method of selecting a champion, waiting until after the bowl games to cast its final ballots.

Texas unleashes the Wishbone offense on the college world.

Ohio State's Archie Griffin becomes the first player to win two Heisman Trophies.

Unlimited substitution is restored, signaling the rebirth of two-platoon football.

Oklahoma is awarded the AP national title, despite being on NCAA probation.

'60 '64 '68 '69 '70 '71 '74 '75

A Century of College Football

All-Decade Teams

1980-1989

OFFENSE

WR	Anthony Carter, Michigan
Line	Bill Fralic, Pittsburgh
Line	Dave Rimington, Nebraska
Line	Dean Steinkuhler, Nebraska
Line	Mark May, Pittsburgh
Line	Don Mosebar, Southern Cal.
TE	Keith Jackson, Oklahoma
WR	Tim Brown, Notre Dame
QB	Jim McMahon, Brigham Young
RB	Herschel Walker, Georgia
RB	Marcus Allen, Southern Calif.
RB	Barry Sanders, Oklahoma State

DEFENSE

Line	Billy Ray Smith, Arkansas
Line	Tony Casillas, Oklahoma
Line	Tracy Rocker, Auburn
Line	Chris Zorich, Notre Dame
LB	Chris Spielman, Ohio State
LB	Brian Bosworth, Oklahoma
LB	Ricky Hunley, Arizona
DB	Russell Carter, S. Methodist
DB	Jerry Gray, Texas
DB	Ronnie Lott, Southern Calif.
DB	Deion Sanders, Florida State
Coach	Jimmy Johnson, Miami

1990-1998

OFFENSE

WR	Keyshawn Johnson, Sou. Cal.
Line	Tony Boselli, Southern Cal.
Line	Orlando Pace, Ohio State
Line	Aaron Taylor, Nebraska
Line	Jeff Hartings, Penn State
Line	Korey Stringer, Ohio State
TE	Mark Bruener, Washington
WR	Randy Moss, Marshall
QB	Peyton Manning, Tennessee
RB	Ricky Williams, Texas
RB	Marshall Faulk, San Diego St.
RB	Warrick Dunn, Florida State

DEFENSE

Line	Steve Emtman, Washington
Line	Grant Wistrom, Nebraska
Line	Warren Sapp, Miami
Line	Jared DeVries, Iowa
LB	Marvin Jones, Florida State
LB	Simeon Rice, Illinois
LB	Zach Thomas, Texas Tech
DB	Antonio Langham, Alabama
DB	Terrell Buckley, Florida State
DB	Dale Carter, Tennessee
DB	Bobby Taylor, Notre Dame
Coach	Tom Osborne, Nebraska

1980-1989

An unlikely Team of the Decade emerged during the "Greed is good" era. Before Howard Schnellenberger came along, Miami was known for a few mid-sixties appearances in minor bowls and its pleasing campus life. On Jan. 1, 1984, that all changed when the Hurricanes stunned mighty Nebraska, thought by some to be the best college team ever assembled, 31-30, in the Orange Bowl to capture the national title. The Hurricanes would win two more championships during the 1980s and helped break the option's hold on the game with a pro-style passing attack and a devotion to speed at every position.

While Miami was swashbuckling its way to prominence, Penn State finally won a national title (in fact, the Nittany Lions captured two in the '80s) with good, old-fashioned defense and a stout ground game. Perhaps the decade's biggest game came in the 1987 Fiesta Bowl, which was moved from New Year's Day to Jan. 2, the better to accommodate a larger TV audience. Using a defensive scheme that often employed six defensive backs, PSU confounded heavily-favored Miami and Heisman passer Vinny Testaverde in a 14-10 victory. In 1988, after suffering through five years of inept management by overwhelmed coach Gerry Faust, Notre Dame won its 11th national title, led by fiery sideline boss Lou Holtz.

The 1980s were a great decade for running backs, with Georgia's Herschel Walker, USC tailback Marcus Allen, Nebraska I-back Mike Rozier, Bo Jackson of Auburn and Oklahoma State standout Barry Sanders leading the charge. All five won the Heisman Trophy. The '80s also signaled the end of Oklahoma's run as one of the nation's elite. Although

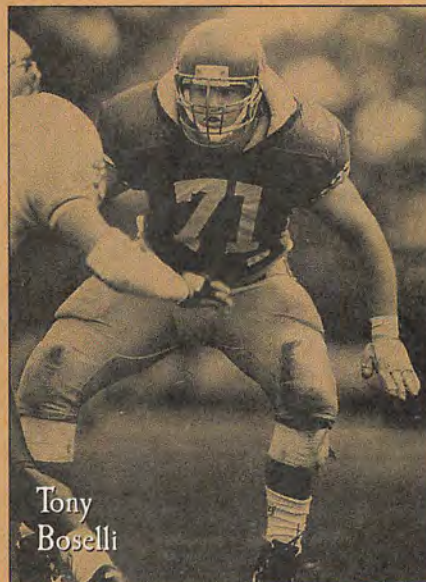
the Sooners won the '85 title and played for the 1987 crown, they were felled by their own excesses and slapped with a stiff penalty by the NCAA that effectively prevented them from competing at a high level for the rest of the century.

1990-1998

The college football world spent much of the decade trying to decide how it would choose a national champion. By the end of the 1990s, it had settled on the Bowl Championship Series (BCS), which featured a relatively convoluted formula designed to pit the nation's top two teams against each other, while still trying to preserve the antiquated bowl system.

Although Tennessee won the first BCS crown, in 1998, the decade belonged to Nebraska, which ended years of also-ran performances to win three titles (1994, '95, '97) and send coach Tom Osborne into his retirement with 250 career wins and an eradication of the claim that he couldn't win the big one. The '90s also marked the full-fledged arrival of Florida State, which won the 1993 title and appeared in the top five each season with metronomic regularity. Two other perennial powerhouses, however, began the decade in style, only to end it struggling to regain past glories. Miami (1991 champ) and Alabama ('92) each won championships early in the '90s but were slapped with probationary sentences that brought them back to the masses. Meanwhile, Michigan, which hadn't sat atop a final poll since 1948, ended decades of frustration by crafting an improbable 12-0 1997 run that gave its Maize-and-Blue legions reason to raise their index fingers skyward.

As the decade (and 20th century) closed, college



Tony Boselli

football was a game of speed, but strong ground attacks and aggressive defenses remained keys in the championship equation. And after several years where dropback passers were the rage, the quarterback position reverted to the multi-dimensional role that had prevailed for so long. The new millennium was dawning, but many things remained the same.

Michael Bradley is a freelance writer from Broomall, Pa.

Milestones

The Bowl Championship Series debuts, bringing together the four major post-season games (Rose, Orange, Sugar, Fiesta) to choose a national champion.

Alabama coach Bear Bryant dies less than six months after retiring with a record 325 career wins.

Penn State coach Joe Paterno reaches 300 career wins when his Nittany Lions spank Bowling Green.

The NCAA splits its Division I into two parts, with 97 "big" schools comprising Division I-A and 40 others sliding to I-AA.

Oklahoma State running back Barry Sanders obliterates the NCAA single-season rushing record with 2,628 yards.

Arkansas and South Carolina join the Southeastern Conference, creating the nation's first "super conference" and triggering a realignment frenzy.

'80 '82 '83

'88

'90

'92

'98

A Century of College Football

What's in store for the next millennium? What will the game look like 20, 30 or 40 years from now? Where is college football headed in the 21st century?

As one of the guardians of the game, Joe Paterno worries about college football.

Paterno worries about the infiltration by agents and gamblers, the interference of overzealous alumni and the influence of the media.

He worries that the reduced number of scholarships for his sport are hurting its quality; that college freshmen aren't allowed to be students first and athletes second; and that players are being exploited.

But as he prepares for his 50th season on the Penn State coaching staff, the 72-year-old Paterno mostly beams with pride about the state of college football and its future on the eve of the 21st century.

"I have my moments when I'm not optimistic," Paterno said. "I worry about the agents, the alumni, the people you can't control who are all around your kids. The media bothers me tremendously. I don't think people understand that they're still students, even though they get a lot of attention. There are so many distractions that are pulling them away from what they should be doing when they're in college. A lot of things bother me."

"As far as the game on the field goes, I'm excited. It's more and more competitive. Overall, I feel very good about college football."

Paterno has seen a tremendous amount of change since he graduated from Brown in 1950 and accepted a job as one of Rip Engle's assistants at Penn State. That year, teams used a two-platoon system with players playing on offense and defense; today, players are specialized and coaches make substitutions on every down. In 1950, there were nine bowl games; today, there are almost two dozen bowl games.

When Paterno began coaching, the Nittany Lions played at 30,000-seat Beaver Field; today, they play at 93,967-seat Beaver Stadium, whose capacity will increase to 103,500 for the 2001 season. In 1950, no one heard of freshman varsity players, television timeouts, superconferences, ESPN, the Bowl Championship Series or 250-pound linebackers who can run a 4.4, all part of today's game.

So what's in store for the next millennium? What will the game look like 20, 30 or 40 years from now? Where is college football headed in the 21st century?

Superconferences

Although Notre Dame turned down a chance to join the Big Ten, the conference continues to look for a 12th member so it could reap huge prof-

its from a Big Ten title game. In other words, there's still going to be a whole lot of moving and shaking going on in the coming years.

If Missouri or Nebraska joins the Big Ten, the Big 12 probably would raid another conference for a school to fill its roster, which could ignite a free-for-all that some suggest could eventually lead to four or five 16-school superconferences. If Syracuse or Pittsburgh joins the Big Ten, the Big East might collapse with its remaining members scurrying for new homes (i.e., Miami to the Atlantic Coast Conference).

No matter who the Big Ten's 12th school will be, the dominoes will fall.

"I just think the economics of it is going to make it extraordinary difficult for it not to happen," Miami coach Butch Davis said. "Because of the success of the Big 12 and SEC title games, it makes it very appealing for presidents and athletic directors as far as revenues are concerned. We're not different than any other sport. We're driven by money and revenue."

"It also sets up a forerunner for a playoff. It makes it very easy to have a playoff and tournament brackets."

Playoff

Finally implementing a Division I-A football playoff might be the most significant change early in the 21st century.

Even though the bowls took their final step to stave off a playoff with the Bowl Championship Series, it appears clear that a playoff is on the horizon. Paterno has been a longtime advocate of a playoff because four of his five perfect teams were snubbed at the polls.

"If television ratings start to drop, the networks

will start to put the pressure on to have a playoff," Paterno said, "and so will the public. Even if we have four teams coming out of the bowls and we had a semifinals and final, it would still be better than what we have."

If the NCAA approves a playoff, officials would have to decide whether it would be four, eight or 16 teams and how the bowl games would figure into the plans. Sixteen probably would be the fairest number.

"I'd rather have 16 teams," Brigham Young coach LaVell Edwards said. "That would help our area of the country, to make sure our teams would be involved in the playoff. With eight teams, you'd almost have to go on rankings. With 16, you can take all the conference champions and fill in with at-large teams."

Then there are those who understand the fairness and economics of a playoff but who want to protect the bowls.

"I have mixed emotions," Davis said. "I have a sense of loyalty to the bowls. I've been at schools that have been to 12 straight New Year's Day bowls and also coached at places where we went 8-3 and playing in the Bluebonnet Bowl or Peach Bowl was a career highlight for kids."

"If you get rid of the existing bowl games, you're going to deny kids and programs special experiences."

Paying Athletes

Its critics suggest that major college football already is on the semipro level, with subsidized players who often go to college only for athletic pursuits. They believe that paying for a student-athlete's tuition, room and board and meals is paying them.

On the flip side, some suggest that football and basketball players at major colleges are being exploited. Because the schools make ungodly sums of money off them, the athletes should receive a monthly stipend, at the very least. They once did receive a stipend and they could again in the next century.

"I grew up in an era when athletic departments provided athletes with a small amount of money," said Davis, who played at Arkansas in the early 1970s. "With the money generated from the bowls and TV, I'm not sure it wouldn't be feasible to give a kid, I don't know what the magic number is, 100

"I'd rather have 16 teams... involved in the playoff. With 16, you can take all the conference champions and fill in with at-large teams."

—Brigham Young coach LaVell Edwards



PHOTO BY TOM HAUCK/ALLSPORT

FUTURE

College Football in the

dollars a month. Then they can take a date to a movie, pay for their laundry or save money to buy a sportcoat.

"A lot of kids in our programs come from economically challenged backgrounds. It would be a very good gesture to the athletes."

The extremists suggest that the NCAA go even further and make major college football a semipro league, with paid players who play for a school but who don't go to school. The NCAA then wouldn't have to worry about recruiting and academic violations.

"I hope it never happens," Paterno said. "We are educational institutions. I would hope that we will play with people who are bona fide students. If it came down to a decision that had to be made on whether you were going to jeopardize academic or athletic opportunities, they would have to jeopardize their athletic opportunities."

Freshman Ineligibility

Once upon a time, freshmen only played on the freshman team not to be seen on the varsity level until they became sophomores. The year out of the spotlight enabled freshmen to adjust to living on their own and studying on their own.

Some folks support the return of freshman ineligibility because they believe it's better for the long-term development of the player. They will support it only if football programs receive more than the 85 scholarships they are allotted now.

"Every kid in America would fare much better if they weren't eligible as freshmen," Davis said. "They would get academically grounded and rooted in the system. Kids come to college and they struggle with time management and being on their own for the first time. They have to deal with the pressure of who's playing and who's not playing."

"But there's no way that can happen with 85 scholarships. You can't take 25 freshmen out of the loop and still play at the same level."

And because of Title IX considerations, football scholarships are likely to remain at 85. Which means freshmen likely will remain eligible.

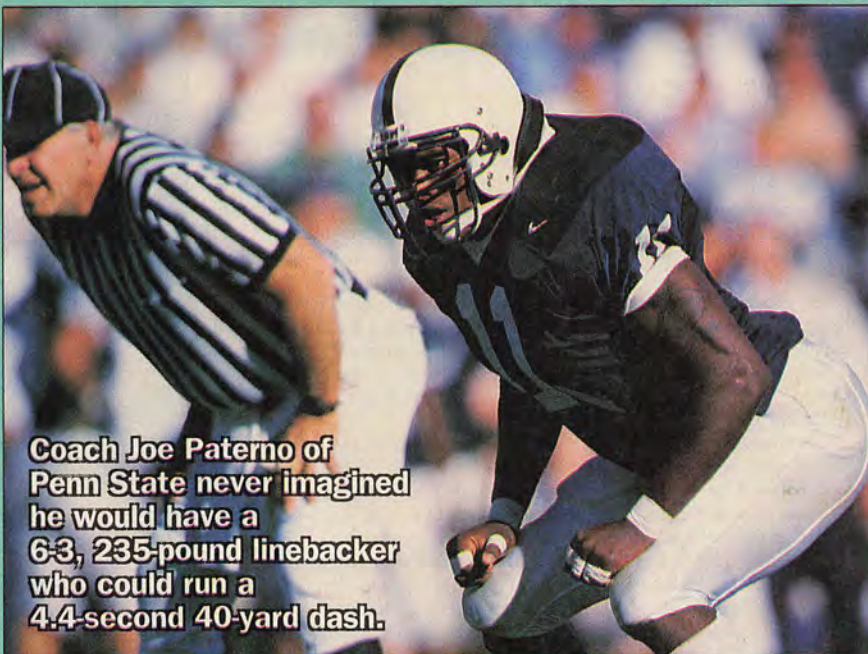
Size of the Players

When Davis played for Arkansas more than 25 years ago, two players on the roster weighed more than 280 pounds. A 300-pound player was an oddity.

The size, speed and skill of players has changed dramatically since then. Davis' team at Miami this fall will have about 15 players who weigh 300 pounds or more.

When Paterno first started coaching, he never dreamed he would see a 6-3, 235-pound linebacker who could run a 4.4 40. But he has one on his team, LaVar Arrington.

"Players are getting stronger and bigger and faster than they've ever been," Ohio State coach John Cooper said. "They're bigger coming out of high school. We had 10 to 15 (high school) kids over 300 pounds in our camp last summer. Every



Coach Joe Paterno of Penn State never imagined he would have a 6-3, 235-pound linebacker who could run a 4.4-second 40-yard dash.

RICK STEWART/ALLSPORT

offensive lineman we signed this year is over 315 pounds.

"I just think the human race is getting bigger. Diet, nutrition, strength programs, they're all better. That all contributes to it."

So what about the player of the 21st century? Will we see a 6-6, 260-pound linebacker who could run a 4.3?

"When I played, a big kid used to be 6-3, 235, but many of those kids were fat and could hardly get out of their tracks," Edwards said. "We had a guy last year, John Tate, who was the first offensive lineman taken in the NFL draft. He's 6-7, 320 pounds and it's just unbelievable how he's built and how fast he could run. I don't know where it's all going to end."

Problems

College football faces many of the same problems it has faced in the last 50 years, such as gambling, drug abuse (including steroids and alcohol) and academic and recruiting violations.

But coaches are more concerned about the infiltration of agents and the expansion of the NFL, which they say will be an ongoing worry early in the 21st century.

They have watched the quality of major college basketball diminish because of the departure of the best freshmen and sophomores for the NBA.

"If the NFL keeps expanding and they keep developing teams in Europe, there's going to be more pressure for them to have talent," Paterno said. "As a result, there's going to be more and more kids leaving college early. The bidding will go up, just as you see in basketball."

The Future

The game of college football on the field isn't expected to change much in the next century. If there are severe rules changes, they might be made in an attempt to limit injuries.

Paterno and Edwards, who have been at their respective schools at least 25 years, say they expect to see more coaches remain at one school like them. They believe longevity will be treasured and that successful coaches who do their jobs ethically will be compensated.

One of the most significant off-the-field changes might come in academic reform. Davis said he expects to see more emphasis on the accountability of schools and coaches to make sure kids graduate.

Two novel proposals could change the game dramatically. The number of players a school graduates could be tied to the number of scholarships it is allotted. If a football program only graduated 10 players the year before, then it could only offer 10 scholarships. The other proposal is to give student-athletes five years of eligibility because it often takes them five years to graduate.

Overall, the coaches are optimistic about college football and where it's going in the next millennium, when players will be bigger, faster and stronger; players will receive a monthly stipend; conferences will expand, merge and dissolve into superconferences; and the national championship will be decided in a playoff.

"I think the game's popularity will continue to grow," Davis said. "Fans absolutely love the pageantry, the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat. It's an American passion."

FOOTBALL

21st Century

By Rich Scarcella

Defensive Player LaVar Arrington

BY RICH SCARCELLA

The buzz started to make its way across the state of Pennsylvania long before LaVar Arrington had even signed a letter of intent to attend Penn State.

Arrington was such a gifted tailback and linebacker at North Hills High in suburban Pittsburgh that he had become as recognized a sports figure as Kordell Stewart and Jaromir Jagr in the Steel City before he was even old enough to drive. By the time he was a senior, he generally was considered to be the best high school football player in the country.

Penn State coach Joe Paterno thought so highly of Arrington, he cut short a trip to Washington, D.C., to see the President when he heard that Arrington and his father had shown up at the Penn State campus on an unofficial recruiting trip.

Arrington eventually became the highest-profile recruit the Nittany Lions have ever signed, but no one knew for sure whether he had a game to match his reputation. They do now.

Arrington ended any doubt with a sensational first season and several unforgettable plays, including one against Illinois that left 97,000 fans, teammates, opponents and coaches at Beaver Stadium with their mouths agape.

"It was an amazing play," Penn State center Eric Cole said. "It shows you how good of an athlete he is."

The 6-foot-3, 233-pound Arrington lined up at his outside linebacker position with the Illini facing fourth and 1 in Penn State territory during an otherwise forgettable game. Arrington timed the snap perfectly, leaped over two of the Nittany Lions' defensive linemen and the Illinois center and landed like a human scud missile on top of running back Elmer Hickman an instant after he had received the handoff, stopping him for no gain.

No moment defined his sophomore season better than the one that will be known forever as LaVar's Leap.

"I think he's unbelievable," Illinois coach Ron Turner said. "His athletic ability, you don't see very often. It's phenomenal what he can do on a football field. I saw a play he made against Pitt. He went to intercept a tipped ball, and his vertical leap must have been about 50 inches. I rewound it about 10 times, and was like, 'Wow, is that Michael Jordan?'"

With his strength, speed and vertical leap (closer to 40 inches than 50), LaVar Arrington is the prototype 21st Century linebacker. Arrington gives opposing offensive coordinators plenty of Maalox moments each week because he's a gamebreaker—a rarity for a linebacker. Arrington is equally adept at rushing quarterbacks, covering receivers and leveling running backs. Don't believe us? Try finding another college player anywhere who was ranked in the top 10 in his conference last season in tackles for loss, sacks, pass breakups and fumbles forced.

Arrington made enough plays last season to be named the Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year by the conference coaches, ahead of a few other All-Americans. He became the first Penn State sophomore to receive first-team All-America honors since end Bob Higgins in 1915.

Try wringing a compliment for Arrington out of Paterno, who has done his best to treat Arrington like a scout-team offensive tackle. He prefers to limit his hosannas for any player, in order to keep everyone happy.

"I think LaVar is a fine linebacker," Paterno said. Unfortunately, he made a couple of spectacular plays, which have created an image of him maybe being a little bit further along than he is. That's fine. It's nice to have a Penn State linebacker get that kind of recognition.

"He's a fine player, but the other kids are awfully good, too, and do some better things than LaVar."

Teamed with Arrington, Brandon Short, the middle linebacker, and Mac Morrison, the other outside backer, have restored the tradition at "Linebacker U" and have given Penn State its finest corps since All-Americans Denny Onkotz and Jack Ham played together in 1968-69. Those teams, by the way, each finished 11-0.

Arrington receives freedom to roam because Short and Morrison are rarely out of position and because Courtney Brown, one of nine returning starters on defense, has become a dominant force at defensive end. Showing maturity beyond his 21 years, Arrington perfectly understands Paterno, when he said that Short was the best linebacker on the team last season.

"Joe could be right," Arrington said. I think Brandon was the best backer on the team. I really wanted him to win that Butkus Award (which goes to the nation's top linebacker). This year, there won't be any excuses. I've got to go and win that award. I've got to make strides."

It will be hard for him to play much better. When he first signed with the Nittany Lions, Paterno envisioned Arrington as a taller Franco Harris (after all, Arrington rushed for 4,357 yards and 72 TDs in high school) or as a stud wide receiver. But as a freshman, the versatile Arrington was tried at strong safety,



"A Perfect 11"

This Penn State linebacker's rare blend of size, speed and strength make him the single most feared defensive player in the college game and more than a perfect 10 in eyes of NFL scouts.

linebacker and rush end before settling in as a linebacker. Last season, defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky said the Penn State coaches concentrated on making life rougher for Arrington, whether it was extra work in practice or starting the season as a second-teamer behind Aaron Gatten, to see how he would respond.

"We made him scratch and fight for everything," Sandusky said. "Nothing was handed to him. We didn't want to make it easy for him. We made him struggle."

Arrington emerged as the starter in the second game and helped rejuvenate the Penn State defense, which was torched a few times in 1997, with his abundant talent and his contagious enthusiasm.

"He has made the difference in our defense," Short said. "He's an awesome pass rusher. He's just a competitor. He brings so much emotion to the field."

Against Northwestern, he hurdled over a running back to rush the quarterback. Against Ohio State, he ran down tailback Michael Wiley from the back side of a sweep. He also intercepted two passes, returning one for a touchdown and making the other in midair against Pittsburgh. He nearly made a third in front of the Minnesota bench before Gophers coach Glen Mason stopped him in the middle of a game.

"I'll talk about him because Joe won't," Mason said. "He (Paterno) doesn't want the pros to take him. Have you seen a better No. 11 in your life?"

Arrington is the most dynamic defensive player the Lions have had since Shane Conlan led them to a national championship in 1986. He also might be the best defensive player they've ever had and the mold for outside linebackers in the next millennium.

After watching Arrington take flight against Illinois, even Paterno was impressed and allowed himself a rare moment of weakness.

"I coach the jump-over-the-center technique," Paterno joked. I don't know about the coaching, but that was pretty good playing. That was an outstanding play by an outstanding athlete."

Rich Scarcella covers college football for the Reading (Pa.) Eagle.

RICH STEWART/ALUSPORT

21ST CENTURY PROTOTYPES

Mack Brown Coach



"Mack the Magnificent"

The University of Texas coach's ability to coach, recruit and market himself makes him the prototypical 21st century coach.

BY RUSTY BURSON

When he was introduced as the University of Texas head football coach back on Dec. 4, 1997, Mack Brown assured Longhorn fans that he had a recipe to rejuvenate the suddenly sagging program and rekindle excitement among fans. Who could have guessed that the successful recipe would include pepperoni and mushrooms?

Brown's first full year in Austin was memorable and historic for many reasons. The Longhorns rebounded from a disastrous 1997 season to go 9-3 and win their first New Year's Day bowl game since 1981. What's more, Texas ended Nebraska's 47-game home winning streak in Lincoln and beat rivals Oklahoma and Texas A&M in the same season for the first time since 1990. The Horns also produced the Heisman Trophy winner (Ricky Williams) and collected the No. 1-ranked recruiting class in early 1999.

In addition to addressing Texas fans' hunger for success, Brown also filled the students' bellies. In mid-November, as UT students began camping out for tickets to the Texas-Texas A&M game, Brown surprised the gathering by purchasing more than 100 pizzas and having them delivered.

That "cheesy" gesture, along with the meatier aforementioned accomplishments and his media/fan-friendly personality, made the charismatic Brown a hit nationally and a hero in Austin. In fact, the locals were so enamored with Brown that they extended him the Royal treatment.

The Darrell Royal treatment, to be exact. The comparisons to Royal, the legendary former coach of the Longhorns, began immediately and increased significantly as the season progressed. With each big win, Brown won the respect of players, fans and media members. And with each small gesture, he worked his way further into every Longhorn's heart.

"Mack has done everything right from the moment he first arrived in Austin," said Royal, who won 167 games and three national titles at Texas

from 1957-76. "He immediately began building a rapport with the players, students, ex-players, alumni, fans, media, Texas high school coaches and so forth.

"Then he went out and led the team to a breakthrough season, which was followed by a really sensational recruiting class. And those are just some of the big things he accomplished. To list all the little things he did and positive impressions he made on people, that would take hours. He just has a way with people."

Indeed, Brown's people skills are second-to-none in the coaching profession. While Dale Carnegie wrote the business bible "How to Win Friends and Influence People," Brown could probably author the football coaching equivalent. On the one hand, Brown is a marketing machine—a slick, polished and masterful salesman of the program who always seems to say the right thing. Yet, Brown also comes across as genuine, down-home country boy who cares as much about values as he does victories. In blue jeans or black tie, Brown is "Mack the Magnificent" in terms of building relationships. His ability to coach, recruit and market himself makes him the prototypical 21st century coach.

More than his impressive record at North Carolina (54-18 in his final six years), it was Brown's personality that convinced Williams to stay at Texas for his senior season. Following the Longhorns' dismal 4-7 season in 1997 and the reassignment of coach John Mackovic, most fans assumed that Williams would forgo his final year for the NFL. Williams had even hinted that he was leaning that way. But then he met with Brown in a one-on-one setting. The rest is NCAA history.

"Coach Brown made me feel very comfortable," said Williams, who broke the NCAA Division I rushing record in 1998 en route to winning the Heisman. "There were other things I wanted to accomplish, but I was also really excited about the opportunity to play for Coach Brown."

The excitement Brown generated carried over to every aspect of the Longhorns' program. Brown transformed the traditionally mundane spring game into the "Spring Jamboree," an event that included a lettermen's golf reunion, a punt, pass and kick competition for kids and a party atmosphere that attracted 21,000 fans for the game.

"There was so much excitement around the stadium," said senior running back Ricky Brown, "I thought the season had started."

Before the '98 season actually started, Brown had already earned verbal commitments from 10 of the top high school prospects in the Lone Star State—an unprecedented number of summer commitments for a university in the Southwest. That early start helped Brown and the Longhorns secure perhaps the best recruiting class at Texas in decades.

"There were a lot of good schools and a lot of good coaches I could have chosen," said linebacker Cory Redding, the Texas Class 5A and USA Today Defensive Player of the Year in 1998. "But I chose Texas because I wanted to stay near home and I wanted to play for Coach Brown. I don't know exactly what it is, but there's something very special about (Brown)."

School officials obviously agree. Following the impressive recruiting haul, University of Texas regents approved a \$1 million annual salary for Brown, a \$250,000 raise plus a \$1 million annuity. The regents also extend Brown's contract an additional four years, through Dec. 31, 2008. With the talented prep talent base every year in Texas and Brown's ability to sell, this should be one happy marriage. In fact, the only job that Brown might leave for is the chance to succeed Bobby Bowden at Florida State (which is Brown's alma mater).

This past season was a whirlwind year for Brown, to say the least. Perhaps one of the only negatives to Brown's first season in Austin was that it was too successful. Brown eventually turned around the programs at Tulane and North Carolina, but not before going 1-10 in his first year as head coach at each school. Obviously, Brown will face far more pressure to win in his second season at Texas.

"People have said maybe we won too many games because it will get fans too excited for (1999)," Brown said with a laugh. "But I've tried it both ways, and I think winning nine in your first year is better than losing a bunch."

"Still, you can't allow yourself to be too satisfied (with last year). We've told everybody thank you for being nice. It was a fun year. But it's time to start on the next year."

Texas fans are hoping for an encore. The pizza delivery guys better prepare for it.

Rusty Burson is a freelance writer from Bryan, Texas.

21ST CENTURY PROTOTYPES

Offensive Player Quincy Carter

BY ALEX McRAE

If he ever gets tired of football, University of Georgia sophomore quarterback Quincy Carter might want to try his hand at journalism. In just one year of college football, he's already rewritten one of the game's favorite clichés. Defensive coaches are fond of saying certain quarterbacks are dangerous when they break containment. Carter is dangerous as soon as he breaks the huddle.

"I'm always looking for a way to beat the defense," Carter explains. He usually has to look no further than the mirror.

If a team of football engineers were hired to design an offensive prototype player for the next millennium, they could save some time by swapping their slide rules for a Polaroid and just asking Quincy Carter to strike a pose.

The quarterback stereotypes of the past—either the ballhandling magician who treats the forward pass like a social disease or the rocket-armed stud who's as mobile as a plowhorse—are as outdated as leather helmets. Comparing Carter to those relics is like comparing a cruise missile to a catapult.

In a game where where linebackers can go step for step with most tailbacks and 300-pound linemen dance around like beefy ballerinas, the man at the throttle must be able to not just read and react, but make something happen. Carter seems to have been designed for the job.

A player in the mold of two of the NFL's newest instant millionaires (Syracuse grad Donovan McNabb and former Oregon star Akili Smith), Carter sports more weapons than the latest James Bond movie. At 6-foot-3, 225 pounds with speed to spare, Carter is tall enough to see over onrushing giants, quick enough to turn the corner and big enough to give a closing defensive back second thoughts.

But in an age where defenses are not just bigger and faster, but increasingly complex, a successful quarterback must possess one other talent, one you can't measure with vertical leaps or bench reps. According to Georgia head coach Jim Donnan, it's the thing about Carter that impressed him the most.

"He's smart. He came in here with no summer practice and, in only three weeks, he knew the system," says Donnan.

"And," adds the coach, "he makes good decisions."

He made the biggest one the day he arrived on campus. After a two-year odyssey in the Chicago Cubs minor league system left him frustrated and unfulfilled, Carter decided his future lay in football. He enrolled in college, a 21-year-old freshman determined to prove that his 1995 selection as a *Parade* Football Football All-American was no fluke. That story alone was worth a mention in the sports section. But stir in the rest of the plot and you had front page dynamite.

In returning to football, Carter hadn't just switched sports. He had switched teams, turning his back on hometown Georgia Tech, which had signed him out of Southwest DeKalb High School, to play for Tech's bitter in-state rival, Georgia. Angry Tech fans called it an act of athletic treason. The press couldn't get enough of the soap opera.

Carter wasn't surprised by all the attention, just embarrassed. "I didn't want all the media coverage," he says. "I understood it was a great story, but it shamed me. All those guys were working so hard and I was getting all the publicity. I just wanted to humble myself."

He passed on the fancy apartment his \$425,000 pro baseball signing bonus could have bought and moved into the dorm with his new teammates. "I wanted them to know I was thinking of them," he explains. "I took a low profile."

His cover was blown quickly. Only four games into his collegiate career, Carter made his national TV debut against then-No. 6 LSU. He was a one-man wrecking crew, racking up 395 all-purpose yards in Georgia's 28-27 victory. Following that game, Carter was a major blip on every opponent's defensive radar screen. But even though he had their attention, Carter still proved to be a handful. Defensive planners found that scheming for Carter could be done as effectively on a Ouija board as a blackboard. He was simply that hard to predict.

Jim Donnan understands the problem. It's one he faces every day in practice. "Whether a team's in man, bump or tight coverage," Donnan says, "the defense is always forced to cover the option."

And in Carter's mind, that's when the fun begins. "I like to keep 'em guessing," he says with a grin. "I want 'em to think when I start running I'm not gonna look up. But if I see that defensive back come in, I hunt that receiver." When he does, the receiver had better be wearing body armor. According to Donnan, Carter throws harder on the fly than most guys after a full windup.



"Dawg-Gone Good"

Quincy Carter's mix of maturity and unbelievable athletic gifts has opposing SEC coaches running scared.

As the '98 season wore on and Georgia's ground game failed to materialize, more of the offensive burden fell to Carter. But even with defenses stacked against him, and despite making enough freshman mistakes to assure everyone he was wearing a 17 and not an "S" on his chest, Carter threw for more than 200 yards in a game seven times and totaled 2,484 yards in the air. He also rushed for 284 yards and four touchdowns. He walked away with SEC Freshman of the Year honors while leading what was billed as a "rebuilding" Bulldog squad to a 9-3 season. One of those losses was particularly painful to Carter, coming at the hands of the Georgia Tech team he had jilted only months before.

A year later the hype over Carter's choice of schools has died down. And after an offseason spent digesting every crumb of Donnan's complex offensive package, Carter figures to be better than ever. That is, if he can stay healthy. Although Carter has the option to run on every play, Donnan discourages it. But he admits keeping Quincy on a leash can be a problem.

"We don't want him taking all those hits, but sometimes his competitive nature just takes over," says Donnan. "He wants to make every play."

It might be more accurate to say he just wants the play to succeed, no matter who makes it. An anomaly in an era where some "superstars" spend more time in the press room than the weight room, Carter continually strives to put his teammates first.

"I'm not into making a lot of plays," Carter says. "I'd rather see my teammates get all the highlights."

That's one wish that probably won't come true. Carter can expect the spotlight to be brighter than ever in 1999. But unlike last year, the guy who wanted to hide when he hit campus is confident about his role.

"It's nice to know it's my team, offensive-wise," he says. "I'm more relaxed." Quincy's comfortable. Watch out, world. The football millennium has already arrived. And it's wearing Georgia's red and black.

Alex McRae lives in the Atlanta area and is a contributing editor for Dunnivant's *Paydirt* Illustrated and *Speed*.

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21ST CENTURY PROTOTYPES

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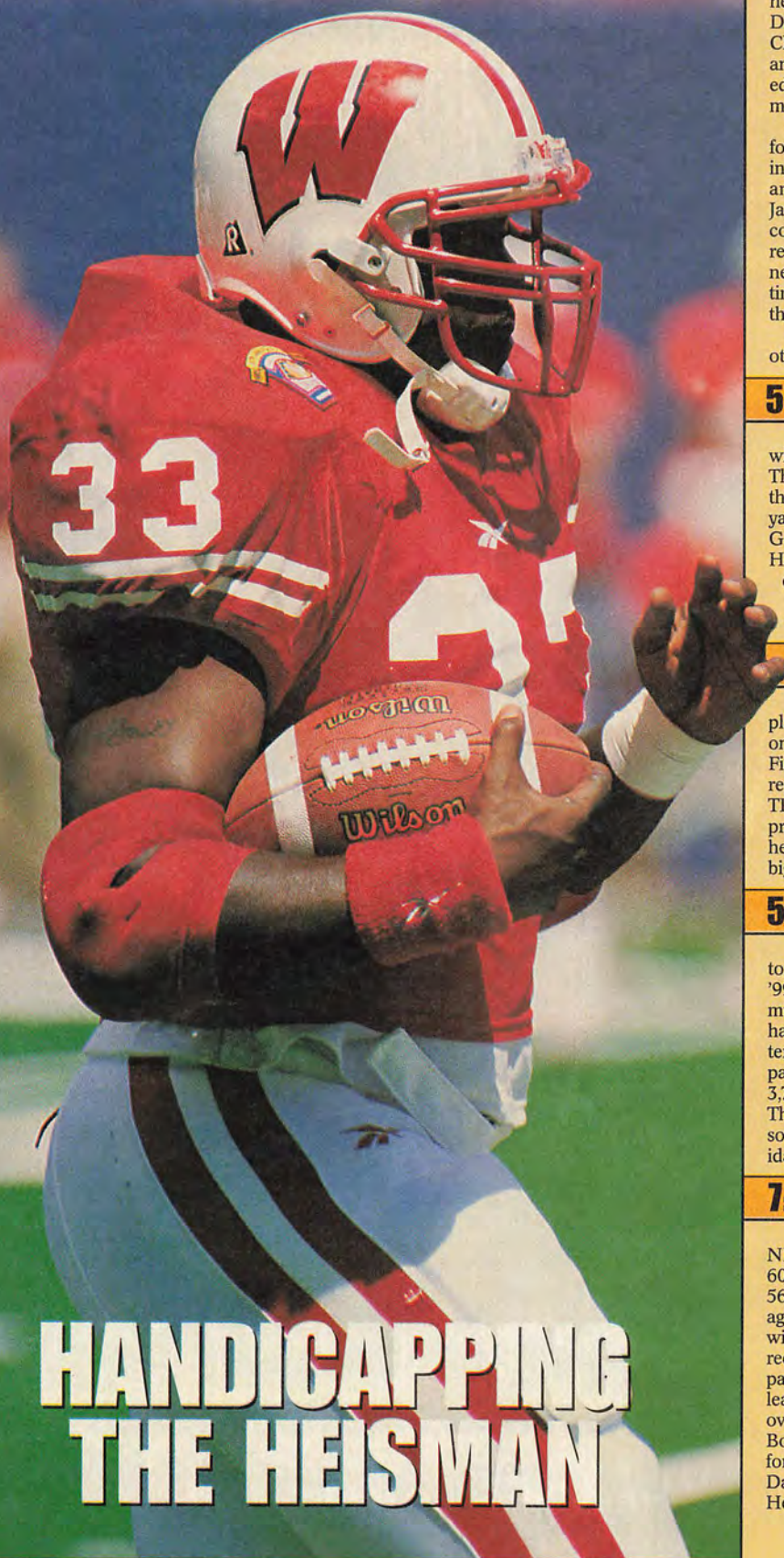
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Wisconsin's Great Dayne looks like the best bet to be college football's top dog.



HANDICAPPING THE HEISMAN

BY DAVE ALLEN

If Ron Dayne does capture the Heisman Trophy this season, the Wisconsin tailback will have several people to thank in his acceptance speech.

Foremost might be Tim Couch, the former University of Kentucky quarterback who opted to turn pro instead of gunning for the hardware he no doubt would have been favored to win. Dayne's thank you list might also include Champ Bailey, Edgerrin James, Amos Zereoue and Andy Katzenmoyer, all juniors who decided to take a seat alongside Couch on the NFL money train.

These defections have opened a gaping hole for Dayne, who started his Heisman campaigning off in grand style by rushing for 246 yards and four touchdowns against UCLA in January's Rose Bowl. That MVP performance, coupled with the fact the Great Dayne needs a reachable 1,717 yards to surpass last year's winner, Texas' Ricky Williams, as the NCAA's all-time Division I-A rushing leader, make Dayne the early-line favorite to capture the award.

Here are the early odds on Dayne and the other contenders in this year's race:

5:2 RON DAYNE, Senior, RB, Wisconsin

The Badgers haven't had a Heisman winner since fullback Alan Ameche in 1954. That could change this year. Only one player in the history of college football reached 4,000 yards faster than Dayne (28 games)—that was Georgia's Herschel Walker (27), a former Heisman winner. Dayne has outrushed Wisconsin opponents 18 times in his career, with over half of his career yardage (48.9 percent) coming after contact.

4:1 PETER WARRICK, Senior, WR, Florida State

Maybe it was the opportunity to play for another national title. Maybe it was the one reception for a measly 7 yards in last year's Fiesta Bowl loss to Tennessee. Whatever the reasons, Warrick (61 receptions, 1,232 yards, 12 TDs in '98) is back for his senior season and, provided quarterback Chris Weinke is 100% healthy, the FSU wideout could offer Dayne the biggest challenge for the hardware.

5:1 DOUG JOHNSON, Senior, QB, Florida

If Gators coach Steve Spurrier is true to his word and Johnson is indeed "the man" in '99, thus putting an end to the recent game of musical QBs in Gainesville, then Florida could have its second Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback in four years. Johnson and tag-team partner Jesse Palmer combined for more than 3,700 yards passing and 36 TDs last season. Those numbers could be all Johnson's this season. Home games against Tennessee and Florida State certainly could boost his candidacy.

7:1 DREW BREES, Junior, QB, Purdue

In three years at Purdue (1964-'66), NFL Hall of Famer Bob Griese hurled a total of 609 passes. Last year alone, Brees attempted 569 passes, including an NCAA-record 83 against Wisconsin—he completed 55. The man with the bionic arm (Brees set new Big Ten records with 3,983 passing yards and 39 TD passes in 1998) then topped his season off by leading Purdue to a dramatic last-minute win over heavily favored Kansas State in the Alamo Bowl. What's next for Brees? Maybe something former Purdue QBs Griese, Len Dawson, Gary Danielson and Jim Everett never did—capture a Heisman.

**TRUNG CANDIDE, Junior,
RB, Arizona**

8:1

This breakaway threat can announce his "Canidacy" with a big showing in the Pigskin Classic against Penn State. The top rusher in the Pac-10 last season, Canidate averaged a whopping 7.3 yards per carry. In last year's regular-season finale against intrastate rival Arizona State, Canidate carried 18 times for a school-record 288 yards, or 16 yards per carry.

**CHRIS REDMAN, Senior,
QB, Louisville**

10:1

Largely overshadowed by fellow Kentuckian Tim Couch last season, the former *Parade* National Player of the Year should start receiving some national attention now that Couch is a Cleveland Brown. Redman threw for 4,042 yards and 29 touchdowns in '98 while leading the Cardinals to a 7-5 record, a six-game improvement over the previous year (1-10).

**TEE MARTIN, Senior,
QB, Tennessee**

10:1

Accomplished in one year what Peyton Manning was never able to do at Tennessee: Lead the Vols to a national title and beat Florida. He also set an NCAA record by completing 23 consecutive passes against South Carolina. Overall, Martin's numbers were anything but Manning-like (2,164 yards, 19 TDs), but if he leads the Vols to a second straight title, you can bet he'll garner some consideration.

**RICKY WILLIAMS, Junior,
RB, Texas Tech**

15:1

No, last year's Heisman winner wasn't granted another year of eligibility. This is the other Ricky from Texas, who outrushed his counterpart of the same name by seven yards (148-141) in their lone meeting last year, a 42-35 Red Raiders win. Williams is the nation's second leading returning rusher (1,582 yards), behind only Travis Prentice of Miami (Ohio).

**LAVAR ARRINGTON, Junior,
LB, Penn State**

20:1

We had to pick a defensive player for this list, so why not this superhuman specimen? He runs a 10.78 in the 100, jumps over offensive lineman in a single bound (just ask Illinois), and strikes more fear in opposing quarterbacks than any linebacker in college since Lawrence Taylor. May be the most ferocious Lion LB ever at "Linebacker U." Look for him to improve on his seven sacks and 17 tackles for losses from '98.

**R. JAY SOWARD, Senior,
WR, USC**

25:1

He wouldn't be the first receiver/return specialist to win a Heisman in the '90s (see Desmond Howard, Charles Woodson). College football's long-distance carrier; has scored a touchdown every 6.9 times he's touched the ball in his career, with each TD going for an average of 49.5 yards (27 TDs, 1,337 yards). Has 10 scoring plays over 74 yards in his career.

**QUINCY CARTER, Sophomore,
QB, Georgia**

30:1

Part one of a dual entry of Georgia Peaches. After two years of minor league baseball, the former Georgia Tech signee finally set foot on the gridiron for Georgia last year, and it was well worth the wait. Carter was second to Couch in the SEC in total offense (251.6 ypg) last year.

**JOE HAMILTON, Senior,
QB, Georgia Tech**

30:1

The second part of an attractive two-horse Georgia entry, Hamilton was the trigger man for the 10-2 Gator Bowl-winning Yellow Jackets last season. With Hamilton (6,846 career yards of total offense) at the helm, Tech averaged an ACC-best 35.5 ppg in 1998.



DOUG JOHNSON



PETER WARRICK



TRUNG CANDIDE

The Rest of the Field

**JAMAL LEWIS and TRAVIS HENRY,
Juniors, RBs, Tennessee**

Before blowing out his knee in the fourth game vs. Auburn, Lewis appeared ready to lock horns with Williams for the Heisman. In Lewis' absence stepped another sophomore, Travis Henry, who rushed for 970 yards. The problem is getting the two enough carries to win the Heisman.

**TIM RATTAY, Senior,
QB, Louisiana Tech**

The nation's leader in total offense the past two seasons. Will have to do without favorite target Troy Edwards, a first round pick of the Pittsburgh Steelers who caught an amazing 140 passes last season.

**SHAUN ALEXANDER, Senior,
RB, Alabama**

Alexander was one of the SEC's best in 1998, when he rushed for 1,178 yards and 13 TDs and caught 26 balls for 385 more yards and four scores. And playing in the nation's toughest conference, this marketing major will have plenty of opportunities to market himself as a legit Heisman candidate, including an October

8 date at Florida and an October 23 home game vs. defending national champ Tennessee.

**MICHAEL WILEY, Senior,
RB, Ohio State**

With his new quarterbacks still learning the ropes, OSU coach John Cooper figures to lean even more heavily on the ground attack in 1999. That means more carries and more yards for Wiley (1,235 yards, 10 TDs in 1998) running behind an o-line that returns four starters, including All-American guard Rob Murphy.

**ANTWAN RANDLE EL, Sophomore,
QB, Indiana**

Big Ten Freshman of the Year in 1998. Threw for 1,745 yards and six scores and ran for another 873 yards and 10 TDs. Also plays point guard on the IU basketball squad.

**TRAVIS PRENTICE, Senior,
RB, Miami (Ohio)**

The nation's top returning rusher in '99 (1,787 yards). With 56 career rushing TDs, Prentice is on pace to break NCAA records for points and TDs set by Texas' Williams last year.

Dave Allen is a freelance writer from Hoboken, New Jersey.

1999 AMERICA'S BEST

Preseason All-America Teams

BY BILL DOHERTY

OFFENSE

QUARTERBACK

DREW BREES, Purdue
6-1, 212, Jr.

There is good reason to believe that for a second straight year the Heisman Trophy could go to a record-setting individual with Austin, Texas ties. Last year, of course, the Heisman hardware went to Ricky Williams, the dreadlocked wrecking ball of a runner for the Austin-based University of Texas. This year's Austin power is Brees, who was born and raised there. Last season, Brees threw more passes (569) and had more completions (361) for more yards (3,983) and more TDs (39) than any quarterback in Big Ten history. Twice, against Minnesota and Northwestern, Brees passed for a school-record six TDs in a game. Against Wisconsin, Brees threw an eye-popping NCAA-record 83 passes and tied another NCAA mark with 55 completions in Joe Tiller's pass-happy offense, which is as wide open as a state highway at four in the morning. "He is smart, has a great arm and great feet," Penn State coach Joe Paterno said about Brees. "That's a tough combination to beat."

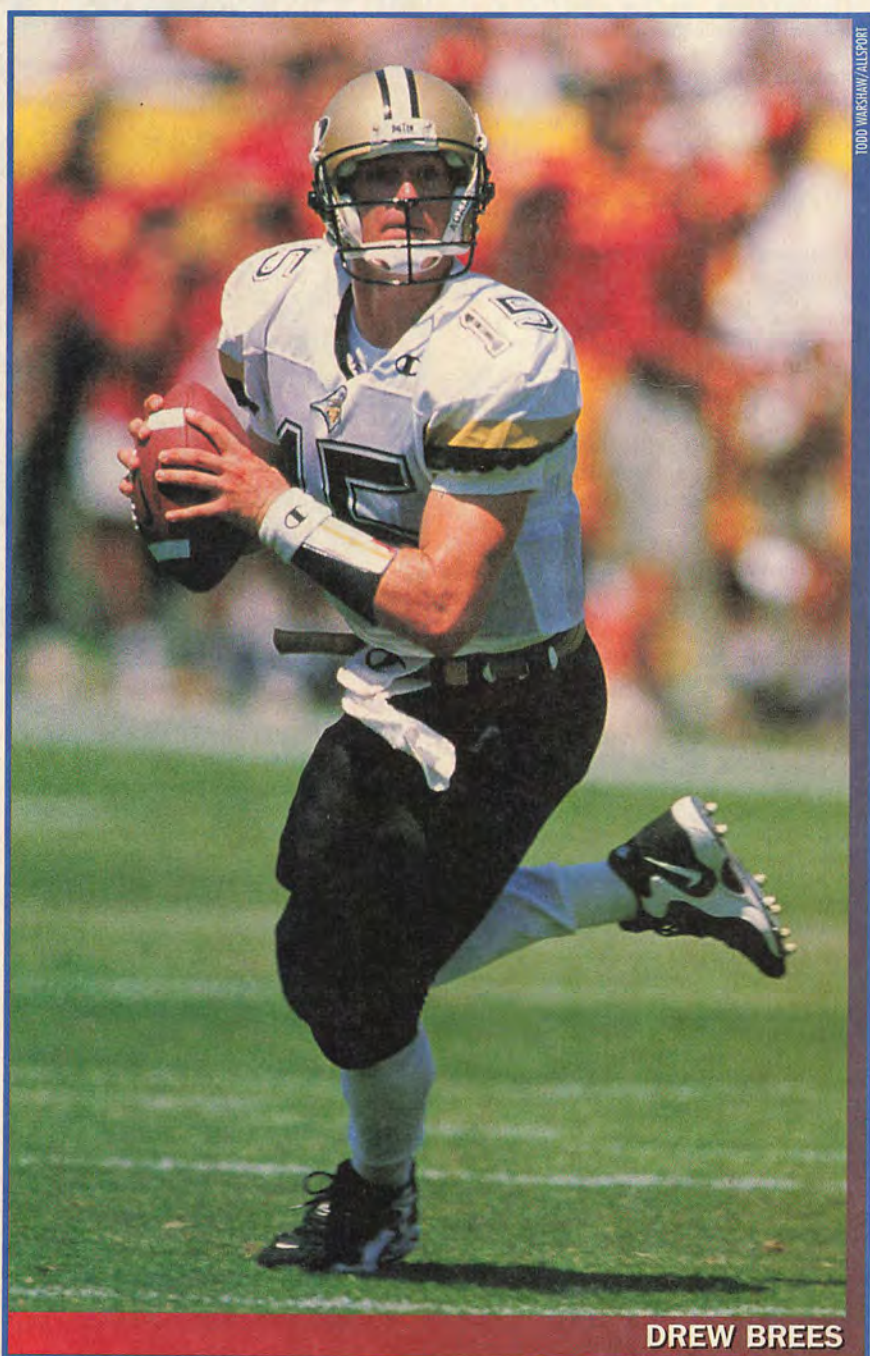
RUNNING BACKS

RON DAYNE, Wisconsin
5-10, 253, Sr.

Four days before last Christmas, Dayne gave his coach Barry Alvarez the ultimate gift: The nose guard-sized tailback announced that he would return to the Badgers for his senior season. To a man, Wisconsin's 1999 opponents probably wished he had turned pro, though. The 253-pound Dayne is a human bowling ball; the would-be tacklers are his pins. "Great" Dayne begins the 1999 campaign as 19th all-time rusher in NCAA history (4,563 career yards, not including bowl games) and needs to average 156 yards per game to pass Ricky Williams as college football's all-time leading rusher. He, like Brees, is one of the Heisman frontrunners. With his staying-in-school announcement out of the way, Dayne decided to get his campaigning for the 1999 Heisman started early with a 246-yard, four-TD performance vs. UCLA in last January's Rose Bowl. "We had 5,000 guys in the box and still didn't stop him," said befuddled UCLA defensive coordinator Nick Aliotti afterward.

TRUNG CANDATE, Arizona
5-11, 200, Sr.

Since current TV talking head Joe Theismann



TODD WARCHAW/ALLSPORT

DREW BREES

changed the pronunciation of his name back at South Bend to rhyme with college football's most coveted individual award, has there ever been a Heisman candidate with a more catchy last name than Canidate? A first-team All-Pac 10 performer last season, Canidate led the nation in yards per carry (7.3) on his way to a Pac-10 best 1,220 yards. In the storied history of the conference, there had been only two other 1,000-yard rushers to average more than seven yards per carry—Jackie Jensen of Cal (7.4 in 1948) and Kermit Johnson (7.5 in 1973). Powered by Canidate's strong between-the-tackles running, the Wildcats finished last season with a 12-1 mark and were ranked No. 4 in the country. With 16 starters back from that team, led by Canidate, Arizona will be in everybody's preseason top 5 again. If Canidate starts this season strong versus 1998 bowl teams Penn State and TCU, the Cats will stay on that lofty perch a while and Canidate figures to help his Heisman "canidacy."

WIDE RECEIVERS

PETER WARRICK, Florida State 6-0, 190, Sr.

On an FSU roster filled with playmakers, this guy is the single most dangerous. In short, Warrick has "NFL stardom" written all over him, thanks to a rare combination of speed (4.47 in the 40), strength (345-pound bench press), and leaping ability (37-inch vertical leap). Warrick put those myriad skills to use when he averaged 102 receiving yards per game during the '98 regular season for the Seminoles, a total which was second only to unanimous All-American Torry Holt in the ACC last season. At season's end, most expected the FSU flanker to join Holt (the sixth overall pick in last April's NFL draft) in the play-for-pay ranks. But Warrick, who snared 61 passes for 1,232 yards and 12 TDs in 1998, surprised everyone by opting to turn down certain NFL riches in hopes of winning this year's national title. If FSU quarterback Chris Weinke is 100% healthy in 1999, Warrick could catch 70-75 balls for over 1,500 yards and the ring could be his.

R. JAY SOWARD, USC 5-11, 175, Sr.

Soward is a sportswriter's dream. He fills up the stat sheets during the game and is a quote machine afterwards. "I talk a great game, I play a great game," said Soward last year. "I guess that's why I'm compared to (former USC star) Keyshawn Johnson." Blessed with 4.32 speed in the 40, Soward doesn't need a compass to find the end zone. In his career, Soward has scored a touchdown every 6.9 times he has touched the ball (27 TDs on 186 plays), and those 27 scores have spanned an average distance of 49.5 yards. Soward is an equal opportunity scorer, having scored a touchdown four different ways during his career: 19 on receptions, 3 on kickoff returns (6 is the NCAA record), 3 on reverses, and 2 on punt returns. Entering his senior season, Soward ranks third on USC's all-time kickoff return chart (1,178 yards) and is eighth on the career pass catching list (110 grabs). "There's nobody more explosive or exciting than R. Jay," says USC coach Paul Hackett. Just ask him.

TIGHT END

IBN GREEN, Louisville 6-2, 235, Sr.

Green is one of the many good hands people that record-setting QB Chris Redman has to throw to at Louisville. Last season, Green led the nation's tight ends in catches (55), receiving yards (884) and touchdowns (12). He had 15 catches for 214 yards in a victory over East Carolina as the Cardinals clinched a winning season. "As far as going down the field and catching the football, Ibn Green is as good as



RON DAYNE

there is in the country," Louisville coach John L. Smith said. His lone weakness? His weakness. Last season, Green played at 225 pounds. During the offseason, Green was working hard to get his playing weight up to 235 or 240 pounds. If he's successful, Green figures to be a better blocker and will be able to make some serious green in the NFL.

TACKLES

RYAN JOHANNINGMEIER, Colorado 6-7, 310, Sr.

Johanningmeier, a definite 1999 Lombardi and Outland Trophy candidate, proved to be as versatile as a pair of khakis last season for the Buffs. This jack-of-all-trades started the 1998 season at right tackle (three starts), then moved to center due to injuries for five games, and finished off at left tackle (four starts). He'll either play tackle or "weak" guard this season. Despite all of the moving around, Johanningmeier graded out at the top of Tom Cable's unique system: He played the most snaps (755), grading out at 90.3 percent—96.8% on his assignments and 83.8 on his technique. He was also second on the team in finishing blocks, which are similar to pancakes, with 74.

CHRIS MCINTOSH, Wisconsin 6-7, 307, Sr.

The star of the Badgers' super-sized offensive

line figures to be McIntosh, a legitimate nominee for both the Lombardi and Outland Trophies. The fifth-year senior has started every game in his career (38) and has a chance to be a rare 50-game starter in college. A team captain as a junior, McIntosh and fellow tackle Aaron Gibson (a first-round pick of the Detroit Lions this past April) formed one of college football's top tackle tandems the past three years. With Gibson gone, it's time for McIntosh to grab the spotlight as well as the attention of NFL scouts as Ron Dayne's personal bodyguard (as if he needs one). So, if Dayne and Co. need a tough yard to keep the sticks moving, they'll probably run behind McIntosh this fall. And guess what? They'll probably get the first down 99 times out of 100.

GUARDS

ROB MURPHY, Ohio State 6-5, 300, Sr.

If Murphy keeps his academic house in order, he'll be Ohio State's next unanimous All-American. The talented left guard, who has started 35 games, was named first-team All-Big Ten last season by both the league's coaches and the media. With a new guy under center (replacing departed QB Joe Germaine), look for Ohio State coach John Cooper to emphasize the ground game early in the season with his absolute blur of a tailback, Michael Wiley (1,235

yards, 10 TDs), running behind Murphy and Co. Sounds like a solid plan to us. Four starters return up front, including Murphy (a future first-round NFL draft pick), from last year's unit which paved the way for a 4.7-yard rushing average by all OSU runners.

JASON WHITAKER, Florida State
6-5, 300, Sr.

Off-season surgery kept Whitaker out of spring practice, but big old No. 68 will be in uniform when the Seminoles open their 1999 season vs. Louisiana Tech on August 28. A member of the 1998 All-ACC and All-ACC Academic teams, Whitaker is FSU's most experienced and talented offensive lineman. Whitaker enters his third season at the split guard position, and did not allow a sack last season. He'll be the leader of one of the nation's most polished O-lines, as all five starters return from last year's team, which advanced to the national championship game and extended FSU's record streak to 13 straight years of finishing fourth or better in the final Associated Press poll.

CENTER

ROB RITI, Missouri
6-3, 289, Sr.

A surefire All-American, Riti has reigned as one of the best centers in the Big 12 Conference the past two seasons. Riti (33 straight starts) has been a huge factor in MU's rushing success the past three seasons during which time the Tigers have ranked ninth nationally in 1996, sixth in 1997 and then ninth again in 1998 in rushing offense. The secret to Riti's success is his strength and explosion off the line of scrimmage, thanks to countless hours spent in the weight room. Riti is one of the strongest players ever to wear the Black and Gold. He holds the school record with a 1,000-pound squat lift (set during 1999 winter conditioning) and has also bench pressed 400 pounds and power-cleaned 435.

DEFENSE

ENDS

JAMAL REYNOLDS, Florida State
6-4, 240, Jr.

In the 1990s, the Mickey Andrews'-coached Florida State defense has produced NFL pass rushers with stunning regularity. The latest model off the conveyor belt is the rising junior Reynolds, who was voted the Defensive MVP and the Most Dominant Player of Florida State's spring drills. Said Andrews of his budding star: "He's not Superman yet, but he knows where the phone booth is." Pencil Reynolds in for a sack or two each game and a huge NFL contract by next summer—just like his predecessors at FSU's glamour position (current NFLers Peter Boulware, Reinard Wilson and Andre Wadsworth, to name a few). "He figures to be a real good one, just like the others we've had at that position," says Florida State coach Bobby Bowden.

COREY MOORE, Virginia Tech
6-0, 212, Sr.

Talk about making a dramatic entrance. This time last year, no one had ever heard of Corey Moore, outside of a few Tech fanatics in Blacksburg, Virginia. All that's changed, now hasn't it? In his first season as a starter, Moore—speed rusher extraordinaire—earned both 1998 first-team All-American and Big East Defensive Player of the Year honors after posting 67 tackles and leading the league in sacks (13.5). He also posted five other tackles for loss and 20 quarterback hurries for one of the nation's most feared defenses. With seven returning starters



LaVAR ARRINGTON

from that unit, expect to see more of Moore in enemy backfields than ever before this season.

TACKLES

JABARI ISSA, Washington
6-6, 295, Sr.

A returning All-Pac-10 performer, Issa has NFL personnel types salivating, thanks to his pro size and playmaking abilities. Last season, Issa performed extremely well in the most thankless task in football: Nose tackle. He regularly engaged a combined 600 to 900 pounds of blockers—freeing up teammates to make tackle after tackle. But this guy is more than a human drain stop. A former high school hoops player, Issa is nimble enough to shoot through gaps and make plays in the backfield, as his team-high 8 sacks and his 12 tackles for loss in 1998 attest. Simply put, if there is a key cog in a Washington defense that finished second in the Pac-10 in stopping the run and also was first in the conference in sacks, it's the underappreciated Issa.

CHRIS HOVAN, Boston College
6-3, 285, Sr.

Hovan, the nose guard with a non-stop motor, is aiming to become the first Boston College player to earn All-Big East honors three times. Don't bet against him. Despite being constantly double- and triple-teamed, Hovan still finished second on the Eagles in tackles (81). Blessed with terrific balance and great football quickness, Hovan was also third in the Big East with 13 tackles for loss in 1998. "I think he will be one of the premier defensive linemen in the country," O'Brien says of the 6-3, 285-pound senior. "He has a tremendous motor that never stops. He has the ability to come all the way across the field to make a play and he's even stronger, quicker and more flexible this year than he has been in the past."

LINEBACKERS

LaVAR ARRINGTON, Penn State
6-3, 233, Jr.

Arrington might be the finest all-around athlete in college football. When he first signed to

play in Happy Valley, Joe Paterno envisioned Arrington as a taller Franco Harris (after all, Arrington rushed for 4,357 yards and 72 TDs in high school). Now he's being compared to Lawrence Taylor—without the off-the-field baggage, of course. Arrington is equally adept at rushing quarterbacks, covering receivers and leveling running backs. Don't believe us? Try finding another college player anywhere who was ranked in the top 10 in his conference last season in tackles for loss, sacks, pass breakups and fumbles forced. Arrington made enough show-stopping plays last season to be named the Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year by the conference coaches. He also became the first Penn State sophomore to receive first-team All-America honors since end Bob Higgins in 1915.

ROB MORRIS, BYU
6-2, 250, Sr.

Morris, the Cougars' top tackler the past two seasons, is a wild man who was once dubbed "Super Freak" by a former teammate. Why, you ask? Morris' past exploits ranged from jumping from a third story window into a swimming pool, shaving his chest hair in the shape of a heart and "surfing" atop the cab of a moving pickup truck. As it turns out, Morris is just as much of a wild man on the field. Last season, he led the Cougars with 147 tackles, 114 of them unassisted. Now a "somewhat" more mature senior, Morris has a new nickname: "Freight Train." The new moniker was taken from a TV interview with Brent Musburger during which Morris compared sacking a quarterback to "a freight train hitting a Yugo." Never one to miss a marketing opportunity, BYU will send out wooden train whistles to season-ticket holders as well as All-American voters in hopes of getting Morris some postseason honors. However, the way this "Train" makes stops, he probably won't need any gimmicks.

RAYNOCH THOMPSON, Tennessee
6-3, 217, Sr.

With All-American middle linebacker Al Wilson gone, Thompson will serve as the ring-leader of the Vols' defense. A consensus 1998 first-team All-SEC performer, Thompson is a

big hitter who led the national champs with 89 tackles a year ago. This New Orleans native has five double-digit tackle games, a number he could easily double in 1999. For his career, Thompson has 156 tackles, including 15 tackles for loss and three sacks. Thompson's 1999 All-American candidacy figures to be helped by the fact that he'll be on television nearly as much as Jennifer Love Hewitt this fall—with Philip Fulmer's club facing their usual helping of SEC powers as well as Notre Dame.

CORNERBACKS

RALPH BROWN, Nebraska 5-10, 180, Senior

Brown became the first Nebraska position player since World War II to start his first game as a true freshman and has started every game at right cornerback (39 straight and counting) since. Brown, who figures to leave Lincoln with more records than a New York City DJ, already holds the school marks for pass breakups in a game (7), season (14) and career (35). His total of 8 career interceptions already ties him for 10th on the school's all-time list. Last season, Brown recorded 46 tackles (27 solo) and broke the school record for pass breakups with 14 (Nebraska's previous standard was 13 by Barron Miles in 1994). The well-decorated Brown, who figures to be a high NFL pick next spring, is aiming for his third straight all-conference team and would become just the 20th Cornhusker to earn that distinction.

AHMED PLUMMER, Ohio State 6-0, 190, Sr.

The school gets lots of credit for regularly turning out star-quality NFL wide receivers (i.e., David Boston, Joey Galloway, Terry Glenn), but they have also done a wonderful job of producing NFL-caliber cover guys during John Cooper's reign. This year's model is Plummer, who should be one of the nation's best cover corners and a high draft pick in the spring of 2000. Plummer recorded a team-best 17 pass breakups and 4 INTs in 1998. A two-year starter, Plummer has 25 starts to his credit, plus nine pass interceptions and 25 pass breakups. With OSU's other 1998 starting corner Antoine Winfield now with the Buffalo Bills, Plummer will be the man on the corner in Columbus in 1999.

SAFETIES

TYRONE CARTER, Minnesota 5-9, 184, Sr.

Surprised that a Golden Gopher is first-team All-America? Don't be. Minnesota might be the Big Ten's 1999 surprise team, thanks to the presence of one of America's best defensive backs (Carter), plus the fact that the Gophers play a non-conference schedule that is softer than a 10-year-old mattress (Ohio U, Northeast Louisiana and Illinois State are on the docket). While their early-season slate is soft, this senior strong safety is anything but. He led the Big Ten last year in solo tackles (127) in 1998, including a season-high 17 solos vs. Penn State last October. Carter also led the Gophers in tackles for loss (15), sacks (8) and fumble recoveries (3) in 1998. With 384 career tackles, Carter is on pace to shatter the school's current tackle record of 482, held by Pete Najarian (1982-85).

BRIAN URLACHER, New Mexico 6-4, 240, Sr.

In the Lobos' odd 3-3-5 defensive alignment, Urlacher plays the "Lobo-back" position—a combination linebacker and safety. At the next level, Urlacher, who reminds some of Florida's former all-everything defender Jevon Kearse (a 1999 first-round selection of the Tennessee Titans), will undoubtedly be an outside linebacker, where he can take full advantage of his

4.5 to 4.6 speed (depending on how high the grass is) and vicious hitting ability. Urlacher led the nation with 178 tackles in 1998, not bad for a guy who was once a 5-9, 160-pound high school sophomore wide receiver. From the truly scary department: Word out of Albuquerque is that Urlacher is bigger and faster than he was last season and that, in addition to his Lobo-back duties, he figures to see 10-15 snaps per game on offense as a wide receiver in 1999.

SPECIALISTS

KICKER

SEBASTIAN JANIKOWSKI, Florida State 6-2, 255, Jr.

Janikowski left Poland, where he was once one of his homeland's top young soccer players, to be closer to his dad in Daytona Beach, Florida. Janikowski is the reigning Lou Groza Award winner (given each season to the nation's top kicker). That honor was well-deserved, as Janikowski set a Florida State and NCAA record with 27 field goals last season, including a season-best 53-yarder vs. Clemson. He also led the nation with an average of 2.25 field goals per game. An often underappreciated part of Janikowski's game is his deep kickoffs, which often force teams to go 80 yards in order to score a TD against the Seminoles' ferocious defense. Last season, 47 of his 79 kickoffs (59.5%) resulted in touchbacks. "He's ready for the NFL right now," says Miami (Fla.) coach Butch Davis. "I've never seen a college guy generate so much leg power."

PUNTER

SHANE LECHLER, Texas A&M 6-2, 215, Sr.

In 1998, Lechler was named the first-team All-Big 12 punter for the second consecutive season. He averaged 43.6 yards per punt and proved adept at pooching the ball inside the 20 (21 of Lechler's punts were downed inside the 20 in 1998). As if being the nation's top collegiate punter wasn't enough, the strong-legged Lechler will also handle kickoff and holder duties this season for the Aggies (11-3 in 1998). Lechler will also be looking to post his third consecutive season of averaging well over 40 yards per punt. As a sophomore, he averaged a whopping 47.0 yards per boot.

RETURN SPECIALIST

DAVID ALLEN, Kansas State 5-9, 195, Jr.

Last season, Allen led the nation in punt returning with a 22.1 average and four TDs. Those numbers earned Allen first-team All-America honors from the Associated Press and Football Writers Association of America. He also became the only player in NFL history to return punts for TDs in three consecutive games. Allen will take on an expanded role in K-state's offense in 1999 after rushing for 83 yards and a score on 13 carries in last year's season-ending Alamo Bowl loss to Purdue. Allen enters 1999 needing two punt returns for touchdowns to tie the NCAA mark and just 562 yards in punt returns to break the current NCAA career record of 1,695, held by Vanderbilt's Lee Nailey (1947-49).

SECOND TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	NAME	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Doug Johnson	Florida	6-2	217	Sr.
RB	Ricky Williams	Texas Tech	5-8	190	Jr.
RB	Travis Prentice	Miami (Ohio)	6-2	226	Sr.
RB	Jamal Lewis	Tennessee	6-0	225	Jr.
WR	Danny Farmer	UCLA	6-4	210	Sr.
WR	Plaxico Burress	Michigan State	6-6	229	Jr.
TE	Anthony Becht	West Virginia	6-6	265	Sr.
OT	Manua Savea	Arizona	6-2	295	Sr.
OT	Cooper Carlisle	Florida	6-6	299	Sr.
G	Travis Claridge	USC	6-6	310	Sr.
G	Steve Hutchinson	Michigan	6-5	296	Jr.
C	Zac Zedalis	Florida	6-3	298	Jr.

DEFENSE

POS	NAME	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DL	Adalius Thomas	Southern Miss	6-4	252	Sr.
DL	Corey Simon	Florida State	6-2	291	Sr.
DL	Courtney Brown	Penn State	6-5	270	Sr.
DL	Leonardo Carson	Auburn	6-3	282	Sr.
LB	Na'il Diggs	Ohio State	6-4	235	Sr.
LB	Marcus Bell	Arizona	6-2	230	Sr.
LB	Dan Morgan	Miami (Fla.)	6-2	220	Jr.
LB	Mark Simoneau	Kansas State	6-0	240	Sr.
CB	Mark Roman	LSU	6-0	187	Sr.
CB	Hank Poteat	Pittsburgh	6-0	190	Sr.
S	Deon Grant	Tennessee	6-3	205	Jr.
S	Tommy Hendricks	Michigan	6-2	215	Sr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	NAME	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Shayne Graham	Virginia Tech	5-11	194	Sr.
P	Dave Zastudil	Ohio U.	6-4	230	So.
KR	Kahlil Hill	Iowa	6-3	185	So.

PRESEASON

TOP 25

BY BOB CUNNINGHAM

A rematch of the 1999 national title game? Or is there a championship in the making in the desert?

Florida State, a school which has proven to be a pain in the neck to opposing quarterbacks in the 1990s, will once again be the team to beat this upcoming season—if the pain in their own quarterback's neck subsides.

With 18 starters back from last year's team (if starting quarterback Chris Weinke can return from mid-November neck surgery), Bobby Bowden's bunch should easily extend its NCAA record of 10-win seasons to 13 consecutive years.

"I see the key this year as being hungry," Bowden says. "That's the thing about being around the top all the time, you are always afraid someone is going to lose their hunger. We haven't seen any indication of that."

Peter Warrick, the Seminoles' All-America wide receiver, demonstrated his hunger by deciding to return for his senior year—even though he would have been a top-10 NFL draft pick last April—because he wants to win a national championship. The entire offensive line is back, intact—and the defensive line possesses two bona fide All-American candidates in

budding star Jamal Reynolds and tough-to-block Corey Simon. Plus, if the 'Noles find themselves in a nailbiter, they have the nation's best kicker on their team in Sebastian Janikowski.

There are a few questions, however. The Seminoles are unsettled and unsure about quarterback Chris Weinke, whose season ended prematurely last year because of a neck injury. He did not participate in spring practice. On defense, the Seminoles has depth questions at linebacker and must inject some life into its weaker-than-it-should-be ground game.

But that's nitpicking. This team is loaded. The only legitimate question is whether Weinke will return. His mid-November surgery was a two-pronged procedure which lasted nearly four hours. First, the herniated disc was removed. Then, the C-6 and C-7 cervical vertebrae were fused. Amazingly, he's expected to be cleared for contact by later this summer and is supposed to return this fall. We'll have to wait and see. If Weinke returns at 100%, FSU is the favorite to win the national title, ahead of the likes of last year's champ Tennessee, Penn State and Arizona, to name a few. Heck, think about it, they probably would have won it all last season with a healthy Weinke.

The Seminoles will be pushed though. Tennessee has six starters back on offense, including quarterback Tee Martin and super tailback Jamal Lewis (who missed most of 1998 with a knee injury) and seven on defense, including All-American candidates Raynoch Thompson at linebacker and Deon Grant at free safety. This veteran team won't give up its national or SEC crowns without a fight.

Two other serious title contenders, Penn State and Arizona, meet in State College on August 28 in the Pigskin Classic. It should be a classic. With nine of 11 starters back, Penn State will possess one of the nation's most premier defenses, led by a quartet of awards candidates: linebackers LaVar Arrington and Brandon Short, defensive end Courtney Brown and cornerback David Macklin.

Coach Dick Tomey's Arizona program, which ramblled to a 12-1 record in 1998, including a Holiday Bowl triumph over Nebraska, returns just about every key player for a run at even greater heights in '99. Arizona will enter the campaign with no fewer than four All-American candidates, having lost only one—cornerback Chris McAlister—to the NFL. He was the 10th overall pick last April by the Baltimore Ravens.

"If we focus on our job and just play the games, the other things will come along with it," Tomey said during the spring of his team's national title aspirations. "We're very excited about the football team we have here, but it's a long time between now and when we play (Arizona State)."

The Wildcats figure to benefit from a somewhat rundown Pac-10 conference. Standout quarterbacks Cade McNown of UCLA and Oregon's Akili Smith graduated; USC lost linebacker Chris Claiborne to the NFL; Washington's talent lefty QB Brock Huard left early; and the Arizona State Sun Devils are talented, but are coming off a disappointing 1998 season.

1 Florida State

Coach Bobby Bowden will again sport one of the nation's stingiest defenses, and the Seminoles continue to play that ACC schedule—which is murder in hoops but a definitive advantage on the gridiron. Florida State has earned a phenomenal 12 consecutive top-five finishes in the final Associated Press poll. The 'Noles return seven starters from last year's defense, which was No. 1-ranked nationally; and a whopping nine regulars come back on offense including Peter Warrick, arguably the nation's top returning receiver. Weinke (19 TD passes in only 9 games) holds the key to the season. If he's healthy, the Seminoles will possess a potent offense to go along with their dominant defense. That one-two punch will be too much to beat. If Weinke's not cleared to play, then the chase group of Tennessee, Penn State, Arizona and Texas A&M all have a chance.

2 Tennessee

The Volunteers have the luxury of returning the nucleus of a championship team, and that means a lot. In addition to quarterback Tee Martin, who threw for 19 touchdowns and more than 2,100 yards, the Vols also have standout halfback Jamal Lewis returning from a knee injury that sidelined him throughout most of last year's national title run. And, Tennessee has the majority of its offensive line returning. The biggest task will be replacing graduated big-play receiver Peerless Price. On defense, Tennessee returns seven starters, including All-American candidates in Raynoch Thompson at linebacker and Deon Grant at free safety, as well as the 1999 Fiesta Bowl MVP in defensive back Dwayne Goodrich.

3 Penn State

The Nittany Lions and longtime coach Joe Paterno had an amazing 1998 season when you really analyze it. They played in the rugged Big-10 with a starting core consisting of only five seniors, yet finished the year 10-3 overall and the winner of a bowl game. If Paterno can get that much done with such inexperience, imagine what might happen with this year's version. The defense will be the anchor. Expected to contend with Michigan's to be the Big-10's best, it returns nine starters. The offense has eight starters back, including a veteran offensive line, quarterback Kevin Thompson and running back Eric McCoo. McCoo (822 yards, 6.5 yards per carry) is a budding superstar. In 1998, McCoo was the first freshman to lead the Nittany Lions in rushing since D.J. Dozier back in 1983.

4 Arizona

Senior quarterback Keith Smith completed more than two-thirds of his passes last season, and in junior Ortege Jenkins the Wildcats have arguably the best backup QB in the country. Running back Trung Canidate may emerge as a Heisman Trophy "candidate;" receiver Dennis Northcutt is unheralded; and the defense returns eight full-timers from a unit that ranked first in the Pac-10 a year ago. Arizona doesn't offer up the perennial title-contending tradition of the Florida State's and Nebraska's of the world, but neither did Tennessee a year ago. Bottom line: They're loaded, and they already have the knowledge that they can win big games.

DOUG PENNINGER/ALSPORT



Florida State's CHRIS WEINKE

5 Texas A&M

Coach R.C. Slocum has a deep, experienced team that returns eight starters on each side of the ball. Even though the Aggies lost the Sugar Bowl to Ohio State to end last season, the team was viewed as ending '98 on a positive. That's because the Buckeyes were a more experienced team that A&M played tight throughout; and that performance came on the heels of an overtime upset of previously unbeaten Kansas State in the Big 12 title game. Senior tailback Dante Hall is a threat to go for 1,500 yards or more, quarterback Randy McCown is an accurate passer, and the defense has ranked in the upper third in the Big-12 since the conference's inception.

6 Michigan

A year removed from a 13-0 national championship season, the Wolverines are one of the deepest of the deep Big-10. After a sluggish start in '98, the Wolverines played better than everyone west of Tennessee during the season's second half. Junior halfback Anthony Thomas should blossom into the next great Wolverine running back, running behind an offensive line that returns virtually intact. In fact, the left side of Michigan's o-line—senior guard Steve Hutchinson (6-5, 296) and senior tackle Jeff Backus (6-6, 288)—might be the nation's best. The defense returns eight starters from a unit that has been among the best in the country for two years running.

7 Nebraska

Cornhusker teams with experience always win at least 10 games, and this Nebraska team isn't likely to be different. Unlike other nationally prominent programs that rely heavily on skill-position superstars, the Huskers build through strong interior lines on both sides of the ball, and then just push seemingly more talented teams around the field for 60 minutes. Nebraska won't routinely put up 60 points, as was the custom earlier this decade, but it'll get its share of shutouts behind a standout defense that features the contingent of linebacker Eric Johnson and rover Mike Brown. With Brown and corner Ralph Brown (no relation), the Huskers may have the country's top secondary.

8 Wisconsin

The Badgers have the best returning running back in the country in Ron Dayne, who needs about 1,700 yards to eclipse Texas' recently-graduated Ricky Williams as the most proficient ballcarrier in NCAA history. But Wisconsin achieved an 11-1 season and Rose Bowl triumph over UCLA a year ago behind its defense, which doesn't get the attention of the more high-profile Big-10 programs in Columbus, Ann Arbor and State College. With eight returning starters, Wisconsin's 'D' is unlikely to miss a beat off their impressive performance of a year ago.

9 Miami (Fla.)

The 49-45 win over UCLA to end the 1998 regular season was a big boost to the once big-time program that has been in a slumber the last few seasons. The Hurricanes, who finished 9-3 a year ago after scoring a 46-23 rout of North Carolina State in the Micon PC Bowl, return 17 starters. Six of last year's eight Hurricanes who earned All Big-East honors are back, including All-American candidate tackle



Tennessee's TEE MARTIN

Joaquin Gonzalez, who is just a sophomore. The one sticking point with the 'Canes may be their schedule, which features fellow heavyweights Penn State, Ohio State and Florida State, all before October 10.

10 Florida

The Gators offense, led by senior quarterback Doug Johnson (19 TD passes in '98) and skipped by ever-present head coach Steve Spurrier, is top 5 caliber. But Florida will go with a mostly new defense—only two starters return. That might mean a significantly lower ranking for most programs, but Spurrier has had his Gators in the top 10 for seven straight years, a trend not worth bucking. The main asset for the Gators, in addition to Johnson, is the return of four starting offensive linemen from a year ago. Spurrier believes sophomore tailback Robert Gillespie, a freshman All-SEC pick a year ago, can replace the graduated Terry Jackson—thanks to the fact that he'll be running behind that veteran group.

11 Georgia Tech

The Yellow Jackets enjoyed a banner '98, sharing the ACC championship with Florida State and earning a 10-victory season with a defeat of Notre Dame in the Gator Bowl. It is a deep and experienced group that returns for an encore. Offensively, the Jackets have senior All-America candidate Joe Hamilton back at quarterback, along with eight other starters from a unit that averaged more than five touchdowns a game. The loss of All-American center Craig Page is offset by the return of the other four members of the offensive line. Georgia Tech's defense may be suspect, because it returns six starters that ranked eighth in the ACC in total defense and is working with its third different coordinator in as many years.

12 Arkansas

For a while there in '98, it looked like it might be the Hogs who would play in the Fiesta Bowl. An unfortunate fumble against Tennessee changed that, and Arkansas limped home with a 9-3 record. The experience was valuable, however, especially for returning signalcaller Clint Stoerner (school-record 26 TD passes in 1998) and his favorite target, senior Anthony Lucas (1,004 yards receiving, 10 TDs in '98). Arkansas also will have last year's starting tailback, Chrys Chukwuma (870 yards, 8 TDs), at its disposal, but the offensive line must be rebuilt after being senior-laden last year. The defense returns seven starters led by free safety Kenoy Kennedy, who compiled a remarkable 95 tackles.

13 Virginia Tech

The Hokies return one of the nation's better defenses, sporting eight starters from a unit that was tops in the Big East. The undisputed leader is All-American sackmaster Corey Moore, the Defensive Player of the Year in the Big East. While Moore gets most of the ink, linemates John Engelberger and Carl Bradley are no slouches either. On offense, the Hokies will run the ball well with a trio of returning offensive linemen forming the nucleus of a blocking wall—which junior Shyrone Stith will run behind... and around... and through. The talented back gained 1,173 yards last season. Virginia Tech's weakness going into '99 is a potential future strength, as redshirt freshman quarterback Michael Vick was one of the top five QB recruits in the country in '97.

14 Kansas State

It's no secret that the Wildcats are unlikely to be a national title contender now that quarterback Michael Bishop has graduated. But much of K-State's success from a year ago—an 11-2 mark which was 11-0 before losses to Texas A&M and Purdue in the postseason—was predicated on defense, and eight starters return from that stingy unit, including All-American linebacker Mark Simoneau and the entire secondary (led by first-team All-Big 12 safeties Jarrod Cooper and Lamar Chapman). The offense will be restructured, which puts more pressure on the defense—but another asset in tow is junior kick returner David Allen, who led the nation with a 22.1 average on punt returns in '98.

15 Georgia

A come-from-behind victory such as the Bulldogs had in the Peach Bowl last New Year's Day against Virginia is an often valuable step toward the following campaign. Georgia will be less experienced than most of the other teams in our top 25, but none of them have quarterback Quincy Carter, who averaged 251 yards of offense per game as a freshman. Carter will miss the graduated Champ Bailey, of course, but there are a host of candidates to supplement, which gives Georgia good depth outside. The defense will be paced by honors candidate Richard Seymour at defensive tackle (69 tackles, four sacks), as well as one of the best trios of linebackers in the country: senior Orantes Grant (120 tackles in 1998), junior Adrian Hollingshed (93 tackles) and senior Dustin Luckie (59 tackles).

16 Ohio State

The Buckeyes were hit hard by graduation—losing wide receiver David Boston (No. 8 pick overall), defensive back Antoine Winfield (No. 23 overall), and linebacker Andy Katzenmoyer (No. 28 overall) in the first round of the 1999 NFL draft. Still, it is a roster with enough returning talent to merit yet another lofty ranking. Many thought that Ohio State should have been the team facing Tennessee in the Fiesta Bowl for all the national title marbles last January, but they don't figure to emerge from the treacherous Big-10 with just one loss again. The Buckeyes will ride the coattails of leading rusher Michael Wiley (1,235 yards in 1998) as far as possible. Wiley will run behind a veteran offensive line, if left guard Rob Murphy (academic risk) and left tackle Tyson Walter (back injury) both return. Murphy, in particular, is an All-America caliber lineman. The huge question on offense is: Who's the new starting QB—Steve Bellisari or Austin Moherman? Despite the loss of Katzenmoyer, the defensive should be stout—thanks to a deep reservoir of defensive line talent as well as All-Big 10 linebacker Na'il Digs (80 tackles).

17 Colorado

The Buffs have a new coach (Gary Barnett) and somewhat of a new mindset after former coach Rick Neuheisel appeared to have worn out his welcome. Barnett, once the hottest coaching name in the country after leading Northwestern to the Rose Bowl in '95, is out to resurrect himself as well as a program that has been good, but not real good for the last several seasons. The Buffs will return nine starters on offense, including senior quarterback Mike Moschetti, who threw for more than 2,100 yards and 15 touchdowns. Colorado's defense, which struggled periodically in '98, will be more experienced, with seven starters back.

18 USC

The Trojans were defense-oriented last season—No. 1 in the Pac-10—and all it got them was a Sun Bowl bid it didn't really want. Their lack of desire showed in a loss to heavy underdog TCU, and SC had four other losses on the season (so much for the notion that defense wins championships). It is a talented team that should allow a few more points with the departure of All-American linebacker Chris Claiborne, but score a whole lot more with the maturation of sophomore quarterback Carson Palmer and underrated tailback Chad Morton. USC also has receiver R. Jay Soward, potentially the most lethal gamebreaker west of Florida State's Warrick.

19 Notre Dame

It's always difficult to figure the Irish in the preseason. Recent history tells us that some of the Notre Dame teams that looked great on paper turned out disappointing, while the younger groups with less hype have been pleasant surprises. This group falls somewhere in between. Coach Bob Davie is under a heap of criticism for not yet boosting the Irish back to the top level. He returns his starting quarterback from last season's 9-3 team, Jarius Jackson. The school's all-time leading rusher, Autry Denson, has graduated, but the Irish pull star running backs out of their hats like David Copperfield. Or in this case, out of the starting secondary, where Davie looked and found former prep All-American tailback Tony Driver.



Texas A&M's DANTE HALL

He'll move Driver from safety to tailback in 1999. Defensively, the Irish return seven starters from a unit that endured letdowns at some key points, but otherwise played well.

20 Texas

Sure, Heisman Trophy winner Ricky Williams and all those yards are gone to literally greener pastures with Mike Ditka's New Orleans Saints. But the Longhorns, led in '99 by quarterback Major Applewhite (ya gotta love that name), may actually be a better team because they're likely to be more balanced. The passing game will be emphasized, certainly, with Applewhite hooking up often with junior Kwame Cavil (51 receptions in 1998). On defense, the Longhorns return nine starters, including second-team All-Big 12 tackle Casey Hampton (6-1, 300) and third-team All-Big 12 end Aaron Humphrey (6-3, 255).

21 Virginia

But for a devastating loss in the last seconds against Georgia in the Peach Bowl, little went wrong for veteran coach George Welsh and his Cavaliers last year. They could have finished better than the 9-3 record they ended up with, but the team still extended Welsh's remarkable streak of at least seven victories to an ACC-record 12 consecutive years. Figure on it extending to 13 this fall with stud tailback Thomas Jones leading the charge. Jones looked bigger and faster (timed at 4.4 in the 40) than ever this spring. And that's a scary thought because ACC defenders already had their problems keeping up with this Jones, who rushed for 1,303 yards—leading the ACC in rushing by almost 400 yards.

22 Brigham Young

The new Mountain West Conference is a tight race, with BYU getting a slight nod over Air Force, Utah, et al. Quarterback Kevin Feterik is an emerging college star whose numbers a year ago were reminiscent of times gone by that featured Ty Detmer, Steve Young and the like. The Cougars have nine returning starters on offense overall, which should help offset a comparative lack of experience on the defensive side. The MWC is viewed as the cream of the Western Athletic Conference crop, and BYU should be the best of the MWC, by enough to merit top 25 consideration.

23 Southern Mississippi

Conference USA enjoyed some major exposure last season with Tulane's amazing undefeated season. But the Green Wave was nailed hard by graduation, and left standing among the ruins is the nucleus of a pretty fair team at Southern Miss. Sophomore Derrick Nix ran for 1,180 yards a year ago and added nine touchdowns, but it is the Golden Eagles defense that makes this team dangerous. Senior defensive end Adalius Thomas was the Conference USA Defensive Player of the Year after recording a whopping 13 sacks in '98.

24 Air Force

The Falcons are coming off their best season in school history—a 12-1 final mark and the school's first outright WAC title after the Falcons upended BYU in the conference title game. A 45-25 thumping of Washington in the Oahu Bowl culminated the impressive run, and Air Force returns seven offensive starters to make another bid. Blane Morgan, the Falcons' ultra-effective quarterback for five years, is gone, but junior halfback Qualario Brown and an offensive line that comes back 80 percent intact should keep the Falcons controlling the ball, as well as most of their opponents.

25 UCLA

The Bruins are in a catch-22 of sorts. Their offense, which was so potent last season led by McNown, will be young and somewhat untested. Their defense, which was maligned for most of the season and which yielded 87 points in their two defeats, returns predominantly intact. Coach Bob Toledo must find a quarterback to run the show, and he hopes that junior Drew Bennett is the answer. Bennett was McNown's backup for two seasons and has been mostly effective in a limited capacity. The running game should be decent, with the return of the duo Deshaun Foster and Jermaine Lewis, and Danny Farmer is a potential All-American wideout. The defense has a year's more experience, and has a lot to prove. If it comes through, the Bruins could move up.

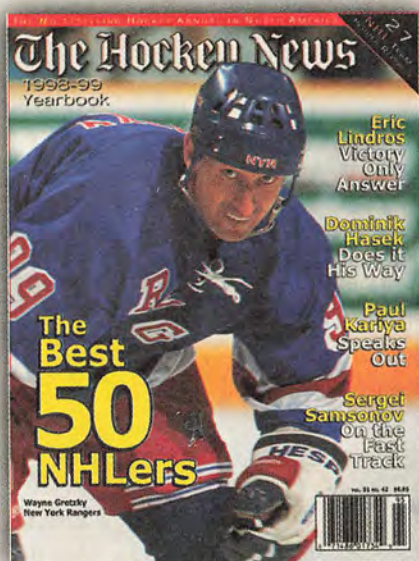
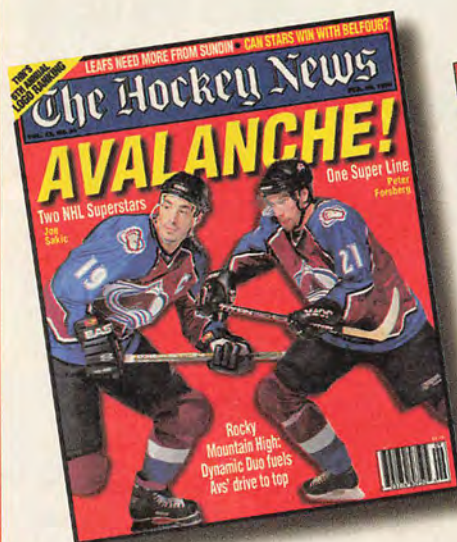
A Dozen Others to Watch

Alabama; Arizona State; California; Louisville; Michigan State; Mississippi; Mississippi State; N.C. State; Purdue; Texas Tech; Washington; West Virginia.

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Atlantic Coast

BY TIM PEELER

CONFERENCE

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Joe Hamilton	Georgia Tech	5-10	189	Sr.
QB	Chris Weinke	Florida State	6-5	225	Jr.
RB	Thomas Jones	Virginia	5-10	205	Sr.
RB	Travis Minor	Florida State	6-1	190	Jr.
WR	Peter Warrick	Florida State	6-0	190	Sr.
WR	Dez White	Georgia Tech	6-1	214	Jr.
TE	Alge Crumpler	North Carolina	6-3	260	Jr.
OT	Ross Brannon	Florida State	6-8	300	Jr.
OG	Jason Whitaker	Florida State	6-5	300	Sr.
C	John St. Clair	Virginia	6-5	295	Sr.
OG	Noel LaMontagne	Virginia	6-5	302	Sr.
OT	Jon Carman	Georgia Tech	6-8	335	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DL	Corey Simon	Florida State	6-4	275	Sr.
DL	Chris Combs	Duke	6-6	275	Sr.
DL	Jamal Reynolds	Florida State	6-4	240	Jr.
DL	Delbert Cowsette	Maryland	6-1	274	Sr.
LB	Edrick Smith	N.C. State	6-1	235	So.
LB	Byron Thweatt	Virginia	6-2	230	Jr.
LB	Brandon Spoon	North Carolina	6-2	240	Sr.
DB	Lloyd Harrison	N.C. State	5-11	180	Sr.
DB	Tay Cody	Florida State	5-11	180	Jr.
DB	Domarco Fox	Clemson	6-1	183	Sr.
DB	Delawn Parrish	Wake Forest	5-11	199	Sr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Sebastian Janikowski	Florida State	6-2	255	Jr.
P	Brian Schmitz	N. Carolina	6-0	165	Sr.
KR	Peter Warrick	Florida State	6-0	190	Sr.

PROJECTED FINISH

	OVERALL
1. Florida State	11-0
2. Georgia Tech	9-2
3. Virginia	8-3
4. N.C. State	8-4
5. North Carolina	6-5
6. Clemson	6-5
7. Wake Forest	4-7
8. Duke	3-8
8. Maryland	3-8

PETER WARRICK



BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

FLORIDA STATE

SEMINOLES

Here's the scary thing: Florida State played for the national championship last year in what was essentially a rebuilding season. From that team, 18 starters return. And 15 of this year's projected starters are juniors.

Last year, the Seminoles did something they had done only once before since joining the ACC in 1992: They lost a conference game, a 24-7 shocker at N.C. State. Because of that slipup, FSU had to share the ACC championship with Georgia Tech.

The Seminoles don't like to share. So Bobby Bowden will put an experienced, talented and hungry football team on the field this year, one that should easily extend its NCAA record of 10-win seasons to 13 consecutive years.

"I see the key this year as being hungry," Bowden says. "That's the thing about being around the top all the time, you are always afraid someone is going to lose their hunger. We haven't seen any indication of that."

Peter Warrick, the Seminoles' All-America wide receiver, demonstrated his hunger by deciding to return for his senior year, even though he would have been a top-10 NFL draft pick, because he wants to win a national championship.

There are a few questions, however. The Seminoles are unsettled and unsure about quarterback Chris Weinke, whose season ended prematurely last year because of a neck injury. He did not participate in spring practice. On defense, the Seminoles are lacking a bit in experienced linebackers.

But any weaknesses should be more than offset by one of the strongest and deepest teams Bowden has ever put on the field.

Offense The primary question on this side of the ball is Weinke's health, because there are really no other gaping holes. In fact, the only starters that need to be replaced are at fullback and tight end. Bowden seemed to be pleased by the lead blocking of William McCray this spring, so he'll get the starting nod at fullback. The FSU coach wants his running game to improve a lot in 1999, especially after four ACC teams averaged more than the Seminoles' 3.5 yards per carry last season. That's why finding a blocking fullback was so important this spring. McCray will be backed up by, among others, former quarterback Dan Kendra. At tight end, Nick Franklin has experience and should be able to step into that position.

Otherwise, the Seminoles should continue to have one of the country's most productive offenses. The entire receiving corps returned, headlined by superstar Warrick and supported by surehands Ron Dugans and speedy Laveranues Coles.

The entire offensive line returns, intact, and that includes first-team All-America Jason Whitaker and massive tackle Ross Brannon. Those two and starting guard Jerry Carmichael all missed spring practice with nagging injuries, but should be ready in the fall. That jumbo-sized group should be able to open plenty of holes for junior tailback Travis Minor, an All-America candidate who skipped running track this spring to concentrate fully on football.

That leaves the quarterback position as the biggest question mark. Weinke, after throwing six interceptions in the second game of the season, did not throw another one the rest of his injury-shortened season. His mid-November surgery was a two-pronged procedure which lasted nearly four hours. First, the herniated disc was removed. Then, the C-6 and C-7 cervical vertebrae were fused. Amazingly, he's expected to be cleared for contact by later this summer and is supposed to return this fall. We'll have to wait and see. If Weinke returns at 100%, FSU is the favorite to win the national title, ahead of the likes of last year's champ Tennessee, Penn State and Arizona to name a few.

If he's not able to go, then Marcus Outzen, who filled in during Weinke's absence and started in the national championship Fiesta Bowl, or strong-armed sophomore Jared Jones, will have to step in. Neither did much of anything this spring—which actually may be more of a by-product of going against FSU's immovable defense every day than it is telling about either's fitness to be the team's starting QB.

Defense Opposing players should have an easy time getting through Florida State's defense, as long as they don't do something stupid, like try to take the football with them. The

unit that finished first in the nation in total defense and second in scoring defense last year isn't fond of such disrespect.

The Seminoles have two dominating players smack dab in the middle of their defense in tackles Corey Simon and Jerry Johnson. Simon was a first-team All-America last year and is the emotional and vocal leader of the defense. Simon is also a remarkable athlete—combining a 430-pound bench press with a 39-inch vertical leap. At defensive ends, where FSU has produced some of college football's best players in recent years (i.e. Derrick Alexander, Reinard Wilson, Andre Wadsworth, Peter Boulware), two juniors are developing into FSU's next dynamic duo, with Roland Seymour the starter on one side and Jamal Reynolds, who was unstoppable in the spring, on the other. Reynolds, in fact, looks like FSU's next superstar rush end after earning Most Dominant Player honors at FSU's spring practice.

The secondary returns all of its components, with All-America candidates Tay Cody and Mario Edwards at the corners, and a pair of strong choices at the safeties, rover Derrick Gibson and Chris Hope.

The Seminoles' biggest question on defense is at linebacker, where the trio of Theon Rackley (strongside linebacker), Bradley Jennings (middle linebacker) and Tommy Polley (weakside linebacker) hardly strike as much fear in opponents as previous FSU linebacking corps. Polley is the only returning starter and both Jennings and Rackley have to prove they can be consistent. The sophomore Jennings, in particular, is really inexperienced. In fact, what is Jennings most famous for? His hit on Dan Kendra in 1998 spring ball that effectively ended Kendra's days as a quarterback.

Special Teams No one in the country has a more explosive set of specialists, whether it's burly Lou Groza Award-winning placekicker Sebastian Janikowski, experienced punter Keith Cottrell or dangerous punt returner Peter Warrick.

If the Seminoles don't win the national championship, it won't be because of another "wide right." Janikowski led the nation and set an ACC record with 27 field goals in 32 attempts. He missed only one PAT all season and more than half of kickoffs—47 of 79—were not returned.

Cottrell is not very flashy, but he will be starting his third year as the Seminoles' punter. Warrick splits time with Reggie Durden as punt returner, and Durden shares kickoff returning duties with Laveranues Coles. All three guys can run like the wind.

New One to Know Nick Maddox, a highly decorated high school running back from Kannapolis, N.C., opted for an apprenticeship under Minor instead of playing immediately at one of the 150 other schools that offered him scholarships. Actually, with backup tailback Davy Ford still recovering from his second reconstructive knee surgery as a Seminole, Maddox's apprenticeship period could be much shorter than expected. If Ford can't go, Maddox will probably be the No. 2 tailback. He sure seems ready, after rushing for 2,536 yards and 33 TDs last season.

Schedule Auburn shocked and angered Florida State by telling FSU in January that they would buy out of their contract for a season-opening game on Sept. 2. That sent the Seminoles scrambling for a waiver from the NCAA and an opponent willing to come to Tallahassee to play a team that will almost certainly be the preseason No. 1 team in the country.

Any takers? After talking with several programs, Florida State signed a deal with Louisiana Tech, which won't help their BCS power ratings, but it's better than going against a Division I-AA program. Otherwise, the Seminoles are pretty well off. They only have to travel outside the state of Florida three times, since paying Duke \$900,000 to move that ACC contest to Jacksonville's Alltel Stadium. The ACC race should be decided early, since FSU plays Georgia Tech, the team that tied for the league championship, and N.C. State, the team that beat the Seminoles, before September is over.

PROJECTED RECORD: 11-0

Atlantic Coast Conference

LOCATION: Tallahassee, FL

ENROLLMENT: 30,519

STADIUM: Doak Campbell Stadium (80,000)

SURFACE: Natural Grass

1998 RECORD: 11-2

COACH: Bobby Bowden

CAREER: 292-85-4; **HERE:** 219-53-4

BOWL: Lost Fiesta (23-16 to Tennessee)

LETTERMEN RETURNING: 58

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL.
QB	Chris Weinke*	6-5	225	Jr.
TB	Travis Minor*	6-1	190	Jr.
FB	William McCray	6-0	222	Jr.
WR	Peter Warrick*	6-0	190	Sr.
WR	Laveranues Coles*	6-1	190	Sr.
TE	Nick Franklin	6-3	265	Sr.
LT	Ross Brannon*	6-8	300	Jr.
LG	Jason Whitaker*	6-5	300	Sr.
C	Eric Thomas*	6-4	291	Sr.
RG	Jerry Carmichael*	6-4	310	Jr.
RT	Tarlos Taylor*	6-5	310	Jr.
K	Sebastian Janikowski*	6-2	255	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Jamal Reynolds	6-4	240	Jr.
DT	Jerry Johnson*	6-2	280	Sr.
DT	Corey Simon*	6-4	275	Sr.
DE	Roland Seymour*	6-4	264	Jr.
LB	Tommy Polley*	6-5	233	Jr.
LB	Bradley Jennings	6-3	230	So.
LB	Theon Rackley	6-2	228	Sr.
CB	Mario Edwards*	6-2	195	Sr.
CB	Tay Cody*	5-11	180	Jr.
SS	Derrick Gibson*	6-2	200	Jr.
FS	Chris Hope	6-2	195	So.
P	Keith Cottrell*	6-4	205	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Travis Minor		857	4.5	7	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Chris Weinke		2,487	50.7	19	6
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Peter Warrick		61	1,232	20.2	12
Ron Dugans		38	616	16.2	3

KICKING
Sebastian Janikowski, NCAA-leading 27 FGs, 42-43 PATs
Keith Cottrell, 41.3 yds per punt, 69 yds long punt

DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC
Corey Simon		65	16 TFL, 5 sacks, 5 PBU, 2 fumbles caused
Jerry Johnson		62	10 TFL, 3 sacks, 3 PBU
Tommy Polley		59	5 TFL, 1 sack, 2 PBU
Brian Allen		57	6 TFL, 3 sacks, 2 fumbles REC
Roland Seymour		57	12 TFL, 3.5 sacks, 2 PBU, 3 fumb. caused
Jamal Reynolds		43	7 TFL, 4.5 sacks
Mario Edwards		20	6 Ints, 11 PBUs

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 28	Louisiana Tech	—
Sept. 11	Georgia Tech	W, 34-7
Sept. 18	N.C. State	L, 24-7
Sept. 25	at North Carolina	W, 39-13
Oct. 2	vs. Duke*	W, 62-13
Oct. 9	Miami	W, 26-14
Oct. 16	Wake Forest	W, 24-7
Oct. 23	at Clemson	W, 48-0
Oct. 30	at Virginia	W, 45-14
Nov. 13	Maryland	W, 24-10
Nov. 20	at Florida	W, 23-12

*in Jacksonville, Fla.

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	FSU	OPP
Rushing yds per game	149.8	79.8
Yds per rush	3.5	2.3
Passing yds per game	251.3	135.0
Completion percentage	51.8	41.2
Net yds per game	401.3	214.3
Points per game	32.1	11.5
Turnovers	21	32

Atlantic Coast Conference

LOCATION: Atlanta, GA
ENROLLMENT: 12,916
STADIUM: Grant Field (46,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 10-2
COACH: George O'Leary
CAREER: 28-18; **HERE:** 28-18
BOWL: Won Gator (35-28 over Notre Dame)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Joe Hamilton*	5-10	189	Sr.
FB	Ed Wilder*	6-2	255	Jr.
TB	Joe Burns*	5-10	199	So.
WR	Dez White*	6-1	214	Jr.
WR	Jon Muires	6-2	199	Jr.
TE	Russell Matvay*	6-4	236	So.
LT	Chris Brown*	6-6	315	Jr.
LG	Jason Burks	6-5	287	Sr.
C	Noah King*	6-2	272	Sr.
RG	Brent Key*	6-4	280	Jr.
RT	Jon Carman	6-8	335	Sr.
K	Kai Cornwell	6-0	193	Jr.

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Felipe Claybrooks	6-4	248	Jr.
DT	Tony Robinson	6-4	300	Jr.
DT	Gunter Kryszon*	6-3	290	So.
DE	Merrix Watson*	6-3	290	So.
LB	Chris Edwards*	6-5	221	Sr.
LB	Matt Miller*	6-4	240	Jr.
LB	Kelvin Hughley	6-2	240	Jr.
CB	Troy Tolbert	6-1	195	Jr.
CB	Jamara Clark*	5-8	170	Jr.
SS	Chris Young	6-0	193	So.
FS	Travares Tillman*	6-2	190	Sr.
P	Phillip Newman	6-1	180	Fr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Joe Burns	474	4.8	5
PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD
Joe Hamilton	2,166	56.0	17
RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG
Dez White	46	973	21.2
KICKING	None		
DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC	
Travares Tillman	82	7 PBU, 2 TFL, 1 Int.	
Matt Miller	65	4 TFL	
Chris Edwards	53	1 sack, 1 fumb. REC	
Jamara Clark	41	14 PBUs, 3 ints., 2 TFL	
Felipe Claybrooks	37	10 sacks, 13 TFL, 4 PBU	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Navy	—
Sept. 11	at Florida State	L, 34-7
Sept. 18	Central Florida	—
Sept. 25	Maryland	W, 31-14
Oct. 9	North Carolina	W, 43-21
Oct. 16	at Duke	W, 41-13
Oct. 30	N.C. State	W, 47-24
Nov. 6	at Virginia	W, 41-38
Nov. 13	Clemson	W, 24-21
Nov. 20	at Wake Forest	W, 63-35
Nov. 27	Georgia	W, 21-19

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	GT	OPP
Rushing yds per game	183.7	167.6
Yds per rush	4.3	4.1
Passing yds per game	205.0	230.0
Completion percentage	54.6	55.1
Net yds per game	388.7	397.6
Points per game	35.5	24.3
Turnovers	18	23

GEORGIA TECH

YELLOW JACKETS

There's lots of talk in Atlanta during the preseason about a national championship and a Heisman Trophy.

And why not? The Yellow Jackets went 10-2 last season, earning themselves a share of the ACC championship that Florida State has owned since joining the league in 1992. Their win over Notre Dame in the Gator Bowl put the exclamation point on what was already a breakthrough season for George O'Leary's program.

After an upset loss to Boston College in the season opener, the Jackets turned things around and knew the season might be something special when they took an early season victory at North Carolina, where they had not won since 1945. That monkey removed, Tech's only other blemish was a 34-7 loss to Florida State.

The Jackets certainly have the firepower on offense to compete nationally, led by diminutive quarterback Joe Hamilton. The first-team All-ACC selection may be small, but he has a massive and experienced line to protect him. And a standout receiver in Dez White. That combination—a strong line and the presence of one of America's best wideouts—makes Hamilton a legit Heisman candidate. The Jackets need only to replace two starters on an offense that averaged more than five touchdowns a game.

What might prevent the Yellow Jackets from realizing their national title dream is the simple fact that the Tech defense must adjust to its third different coordinator in as many years. Nothing against Ted Roof, a former Tech player himself who was promoted from linebacker coach when coordinator Randy Edsall took the Connecticut head coach job, but he inherited a lot of question marks heading into this season. The Yellow Jackets allowed 30-plus points in four different games last season and will have a young front seven this year.

If Roof can solve those problems, and the Tech defense can just get in the way of opponents, Hamilton and his crew could be able to provide the points necessary to be a national contender.

Offense

Explosive is hardly the word to describe Georgia Tech's offense. Led by diminutive dynamo Joe Hamilton at quarterback, the Yellow Jackets nonetheless had the ACC's highest scoring average last year.

Hamilton discovered early on last season who his favorite target would be, a little-known sophomore named Dez White, who made a name for himself quickly. White was third in the league in receptions per game and touchdown receptions behind Florida State's Peter Warrick and N.C. State's Torry Holt. Not bad company for a guy who wasn't projected to be a starter last year. However, the receiving corps is not very deep and the other Jackets starter is expected to be one of three guys: junior Jon Muires (who missed most of 1998 with a foot injury), sophomore Kelly Campbell (the fastest guy on the team), or redshirt freshman Kerry Watkins.

All the other skill positions are set, with sophomore Joe Burns returning at tailback and Ed Wilder returning at fullback. Burns could be pushed by redshirt freshman Gordon Clinkscale, who burst onto the scene this spring. Clinkscale had an 80-yard TD run on his first carry in the final spring scrimmage.

Aside from developing depth at wide receiver and at tailback, the primary emphasis this spring was finding a capable backup for Hamilton, who has not had injury problems during his career, but is still only 5-10 and 189 pounds. Not to mention that O'Leary needs to groom someone for next year. Sophomore George Godsey, who completed only eight passes last year, had the edge over redshirt freshman Jermaine Crenshaw and true freshman Brian Camp, but nothing was settled during the spring.

Defense

No matter how you figure it, Tech's retooled defensive front is the key to the team's success this season. Last year, the Yellow Jackets somehow managed to survive having the ACC's second worst defense in terms of yards allowed. The defense gave up a lot of big plays, but

kept teams from converting them to touchdowns, which partially explains why Tech was third in the ACC in scoring defense, allowing 24.3 points a game.

Tech must find replacement parts for stellar ends Nate Stimson (a fifth-round NFL draft pick last spring) and Jesse Tarplin (an All-ACC selection); but its two starting defensive tackles, Merrix Watson and Guenter Kryszon, are back in the fold. The master plan is to move Watson to defensive end and fill Watson's vacant tackle with junior Tony Robinson, who has made 11 career starts. The other end spot will be manned by sackmaster Felipe Claybrooks (team-high 10 sacks), who isn't used to play every down yet. He averaged about 30 snaps per game last year. It seemed to work in the spring. Much-needed depth up front could come from redshirt defensive tackles Berwin Echols and Tim Brown.

At linebacker, injuries are a concern going into the season. Matt Miller missed all spring recovering from last fall's knee surgery and Chris Edwards suffered a separated shoulder early in the spring and did not participate the rest of the time. Both are projected starters. And junior Matt Uremovich still has four games remaining on a year-long NCAA suspension for failing a drug test.

However, the coaches were impressed enough with redshirt freshman inside linebacker Kelvin Hughley that he will probably get a starting job in the fall. Senior Donte Booker and sophomore Ross Mitchell will also compete for that slot.

Travares Tillman, Troy Tolbert and Jamara Clark are experienced enough to offset the loss of two athletic starters in the secondary. Tillman, the free safety, is the team's top returning tackler (82) and is an all-league honors candidate, while Clark led the Yellow Jackets with three interceptions and 14 pass breakups a year ago.

The bottom line, though, is if the Jackets hope to make some noise nationally, this defense needs to start the shouting.

Special Teams

For a team with national championship aspirations, the Yellow Jackets are missing a key component. They have to replace their kicker, punter and punt return specialists—and the candidates don't have a lot of experience.

Placekicker Kai Cornwell made his only attempt last year, and both punting candidates are walk-ons. The better of the two candidates is Dan Dyke, who would have a tough task trying to replace Rodney Williams (a seventh-round pick of the St. Louis Rams last month). The Jackets did sign two kickers to scholarships, Luke Manget and Phillip Newman, and they might have to be counted on heading into the season opener—if Cornwell or Dyke falter.

New Ones to Know

Clinkscale made great strides this spring, which excited Tech's offensive coordinator Ralph Friedgen. With the graduation of Delaunta Coleman and with projected starters Chris Edwards (shoulder injury) and Matt Miller (knee) on the sidelines this spring, Hughley emerged as a future force to be reckoned with. Redshirt defensive tackles Berwin Echols (Decatur, Ga.), and Tim Brown (Columbia, S.C.) also got lots of reps in spring ball. Their development is key if Tech is going to reach its stated 1999 goals of playing better run defense and producing a more consistent pass rush.

Schedule

For the Jackets, the season will be defined in the second game. If they want to claim an outright ACC championship, they will have to win the Sept. 11 game at Florida State, something no team has done in 40 consecutive games.

The Jackets play at Navy to ease into the schedule, but all eyes will be towards Tallahassee. The rest of the schedule is in Tech's favor for a clean sweep, since it plays North Carolina, N.C. State, Clemson and Georgia at home. The most difficult remaining ACC game is a Nov. 6 game at Virginia.

PROJECTED RECORD: 9-2

VIRGINIA

CAVALIERS

But for a devastating loss in the last seconds against Georgia in the Peach Bowl, little went wrong for veteran coach George Welsh and his Cavaliers last year. They could have finished with better than the 9-3 record they ended up with, but the team still extended Welsh's remarkable streak of at least seven victories to an ACC-record 12 consecutive years.

This year, however, Welsh has to revamp his defense and find both a new quarterback and new receiving corps on offense if the Cavaliers want to see that streak extend to 13.

Junior quarterback Dan Ellis is expected to take over the offense, which will be run by former Virginia offensive coordinator Gary Tranquill again. He joined the Cavs from Michigan State after Sparky Woods' hasty departure for Mississippi State.

On defense, the Cavs have to replace five starters, including All-America safety Anthony Poindexter, defensive end Patrick Kerney, middle linebacker Wali Rainer and defensive tackle Antonio Dingle. Poindexter, Kerney, Rainer and Dingle were all NFL draft picks this past April, and all are quality performers.

Still, crusty old Welsh is optimistic.

"I don't think we are rebuilding," he said during the spring. "I think we have a good chance to be a pretty good team."

Offense The Cavaliers were second in the ACC, behind N.C. State, in total offense last year, but that doesn't mean that Welsh was pleased with the outcome. He replaced offensive coordinator Sparky Woods with Gary Tranquill, a Virginia veteran who had spent much of the decade at Virginia Tech, Michigan State in the NFL.

Tranquill will not have an easy job. He has to mold junior Dan Ellis into a productive quarterback, which may be difficult to do without any experienced receivers. Ellis is smart, but lacks experience (just six pass attempts in 1998) as well as the size and mobility of his predecessor, Aaron Brooks (a fourth-round draft pick of the Green Bay Packers).

Kevin Coffey is the only returning wideout with much game experience. He's no burner, but still averaged 25.4 yards per catch last season. He'll be joined at wide receiver by either Ahmad Hawkins (10 catches, 176 yards in 1998) or sophomore James Johnson, who was impressive during spring ball.

The running game is something Tranquill won't have to worry about. The Cavaliers have one of the country's most consistent tailbacks in senior Thomas Jones, who rushed for nearly 400 more yards than any back in the ACC. Jones also was the team's second-leading receiver with 28 catches. Jones is ready to impress the NFL scouts after looking bigger and faster (hand-timed at 4.4 in the 40) this spring.

The Cavs could have one of the most dangerous rushing attacks in the entire country, but the status of junior reserve tailback Antoine Womack (708 yards, 4 rushing TDs) won't be known until the fall. Womack was facing felony charges for his participation in an on-campus fight in February and took a leave of absence from the team. He could be lost for good. If he is, then Tranquill's insurance policy will be redshirt freshman Arlen Harris, the younger brother of Penn State fullback Aaron Harris.

Defense There aren't a lot of familiar faces from a squad that finished third in the league behind Florida State and Clemson in yards allowed. And we are not just talking about Poindexter and Kerney.

The Cavaliers also have to find replacements for middle linebacker Rainer, who led the team in tackles (134) in 1998 and was chosen in the fourth round by the Cleveland Browns last spring. That duty will likely fall to

junior Yubrenal Isabelle (23 tackles in 1998), who played well this spring. Making Isabelle's transition easier is the fact that the Cavaliers' two outside linebackers—Bryon Thweatt and Donny Green—are back. Thweatt was second on the team in stops (99), while Green was third with 85 tackles.

Up front, where the Cavs have to replace Kerney (a late first-round pick of the NFC champion Atlanta Falcons), Travis Griffin (40 tackles, 2 sacks) has been moved from his normal left side to the right side that Kerney (15 sacks, 21 tackles for loss in 1998) held down. Darryl Sanders and Ljubomir Stamenich will vie for the other side.

The Cavs have depth at defensive tackle, despite losing All-ACC performer Antonio Dingle. In the secondary, three-year regular Antwan Harris will move from cornerback to safety to fill in Poindexter's departure, while the other safety position is up in the air.

Dwayne Stukes and Tim Spruill are expected to be the starters at the corners. Stukes is coming off an injury-plagued season that saw him participate in only five games. Spruill (57 tackles) started 10 games last year.

Special Teams For the last three years, Virginia has been breaking in either a new kicker or a new punter. That won't happen this year, as junior Todd Braverman and senior Donnie Scott will both be returning as specialists. Scott was third in the ACC in punting last year, while Braverman made 11 of his 19 field goal attempts last year.

However, the left-footed Braverman, who missed a critical field goal and extra point in the Cavs' heartbreaking 35-33 loss to Georgia in the Peach Bowl, is no sure thing. He is expected to be challenged by sophomore David Greene for the placekicking duties. Greene was the team's kickoff specialist last year.

New Ones to Know James Johnson, a 6-1, 190-pound sophomore, impressed the coaches in the spring and could step into one of the vacant wide receiver positions in the fall. Athletic redshirt freshman Tavon Mason (5-11, 175) worked out as a receiver and in the secondary during the spring, as the coaches tried to find a way to get him on the field. And of course, redshirt freshman tailback Arlen Harris will play a much bigger role in 1999, if Womack is unable to return.

Schedule The schedule maker handed the Cavaliers an odd slate for this fall, starting with three of the first games on the road. But that is followed by a stretch of five out of six games at home, including games against archrival Virginia Tech and defending ACC co-champions Florida State and Georgia Tech.

Unlike the last two years when Auburn was on the schedule, the Cavaliers don't have much other than their intrastate rivalry game with Virginia Tech outside the ACC. They play at Brigham Young and at Buffalo, two winnable games for the rebuilding Cavs.



THOMAS JONES

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-3

Atlantic Coast Conference

LOCATION: Charlottesville, VA

ENROLLMENT: 18,417

STADIUM: Scott Stadium (44,000)

SURFACE: Natural Grass

1998 RECORD: 9-3

COACH: George Welsh

CAREER: 176-121-4; **HERE:** 121-75-3

BOWL: Lost Peach (35-33 to Georgia)

LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE			
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT
QB	Dan Ellis	6-2	210
FB	Anthony Southern*	6-0	239
TB	Thomas Jones*	5-10	205
WR	Ahmad Hawkins	5-10	193
WR	Kevin Coffey*	6-4	197
TE	Casey Crawford*	6-6	250
LT	Josh Lawson*	6-5	293
LG	Noel LaMontagne*	6-5	302
C	John St. Clair*	6-5	295
RG	Evan Routzahn	6-5	305
RT	Brad Barnes	6-7	310
K	Todd Braverman*	5-7	167

DEFENSE			
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT
DE	Travis Griffith*	6-3	255
DT	Maurice Anderson*	6-3	285
DT	Monsanto Pope*	6-3	265
DE	Darryl Sanders	6-3	265
LB	Byron Thweatt*	6-2	232
LB	Yubrenal Isabelle	6-1	235
LB	Donny Green*	6-2	265
CB	Dwayne Stukes*	5-11	195
CB	Tim Spruill*	5-10	175
S	Jason Small	6-1	195
S	Antwan Harris*	5-10	185
P	Donnie Scott*	6-5	210

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Thomas Jones	1,303	5.5	13
Antwoine Womack	708	6.3	4

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Dan Ellis	30	33.3	0	1

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Thomas Jones	28	179	6.4	2

KICKING
Todd Braverman, 12 of 19 FGs, 74 points
Donnie Scott, 3rd in ACC with 42.6 yard average

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Byron Thweatt	99	6 TFL, 1 sack, 2 fum. REC, 2 PBU, 2 int.
Donny Green	85	8 TFL, 2.5 sacks, 2 PBU, 2 fum. caused
Tim Spruill	57	6 PBU, 1 int.
Travis Griffith	40	5 TFL, 2 sacks, 1 fum. caused

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at North Carolina	W, 30-13
Sept. 11	at Clemson	W, 20-18
Sept. 18	Wake Forest	W, 38-17
Sept. 25	at Brigham Young	—
Oct. 2	Virginia Tech	W, 36-32
Oct. 9	Duke	W, 24-0
Oct. 16	at N.C. State	W, 23-13
Oct. 30	Florida State	L, 45-14
Nov. 6	Georgia Tech	L, 41-38
Nov. 13	Buffalo	—
Nov. 20	at Maryland	W, 31-19

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	VIRGINIA	OPP
Rushing yds per game	213.1	118.5
Yards per rush	5.0	3.2
Passing yds per game	213.5	214.7
Completion percentage	53.4	50.3
Net yds per game	426.6	333.3
Points per game	29.5	19.3
Turnovers	20	30

Atlantic Coast Conference

LOCATION: Raleigh, N.C.
ENROLLMENT: 27,169
STADIUM: Carter-Finley Stadium (51,500)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 7-5
COACH: Mike O'Cain
CAREER: 35-34; **HERE:** 35-34
BOWL: Lost Micron PC (46-23 to Miami, Fla.)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Jamie Barnette*	6-0	190	Sr.
FB	Derek Roberts*	6-1	225	Sr.
TB	Rahshon Spikes*	5-11	204	Sr.
WR	Chris Coleman*	6-0	203	Sr.
WR	Ryan Hamrick	6-3	205	Sr.
TE	Andy VanDerVeer	6-5	250	So.
LT	Jarvis Borum	6-8	332	Jr.
LG	Ryan Knudson	6-5	293	Sr.
C	Keegan Weir	6-5	280	So.
RG	Alex Rice*	6-4	302	Jr.
RT	Todd Boyle*	6-7	303	Sr.
K	Kent Passingham	5-10	165	Jr.

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Clint Johnson*	6-3	256	Jr.
DT	Jeff Fisher	6-2	280	Jr.
DT	Darius Bryant*	6-2	299	So.
DE	Corey Smith	6-3	238	So.
LB	Levar Fisher*	6-1	223	So.
LB	Edrick Smith	6-1	235	So.
LB	Clayton White*	6-0	224	Jr.
CB	Lloyd Harrison*	5-11	193	Sr.
CB	Tony Scott*	5-11	187	Sr.
SS	Adrian Wilson	6-3	195	So.
FS	Brian Williams	6-0	184	So.
P	Scott Earwood*	6-1	207	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Ray Robinson	822	5.3	10
Rahshon Spikes	381	3.8	1

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Jamie Barnette	3,169	51.2	18	11

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Chris Coleman	52	876	16.8	5
Ryan Hamrick	16	323	20.2	1

KICKING	YDS	AVG	TD
Scott Earwood, 42 punts, 37.0 yds per kick, 13 inside 20			

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Clayton White	101	8 TFL, 2.5 sacks, 2 pressures, 3 PBU
Edrick Smith	94	11 TFL, 6 sacks, 4 pressures
Lloyd Harrison	80	23 PBU, 7 int., 2 fumbles caused
Levar Fisher	74	3 TFL, 4 pressures, 3 fumbles caused, 4 PBU
Tony Scott	67	6 PBU, 2 int

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 28	at Texas (BCA Classic)*	—
Sept. 4	South Carolina	—
Sept. 11	William & Mary	—
Sept. 19	at Florida State	W, 24-7
Sept. 26	at Wake Forest	W, 38-27
Oct. 9	Clemson	W, 46-39
Oct. 16	Virginia	L, 13-23
Oct. 23	at Duke	W, 27-24
Oct. 30	at Georgia Tech	L, 13-23
Nov. 6	Maryland	W, 35-21
Nov. 11	vs. North Carolina**	L, 34-37
Nov. 20	at East Carolina	—

*in Austin, Texas **in Charlotte, N.C.

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	NCSU	OPP
Rushing yds per game	133.6	168.0
Yards per rush	3.6	4.2
Passing yds per game	309.2	206.5
Completion percentage	51.9	52.2
Net yds per game	442.8	374.5
Points per game	31.2	27.5
Turnovers	21	25

NORTH CAROLINA STATE

WOLFPACK

Mike O'Cain ought to have a rollercoaster named after his 1998 team. Maybe the Howling Wolf would be fitting, because nothing better describes the ups and downs O'Cain and his troops went through last year.

How else do you describe a miracle win over Ohio U. in the first game, followed by college football's upset of the decade the next week against Florida State? Unable to shake the high of that victory, the Wolfpack lost the next week to Baylor, but came back immediately to beat nationally-ranked Syracuse. There were losses to Georgia Tech, Virginia, North Carolina and Miami to offset the spectacular win over Florida State.

The heart of that team, All-America wide receiver Torry Holt, who finished his career as the ACC's all-time leading receiver, has taken his game to the NFL, but there is still plenty of offense to go around.

Senior quarterback Jamie Barnette is an underrated college player, who enters this season with more passing yards through three seasons than any quarterback in league history. If receivers Chris Coleman, Ryan Hamrick, Koren Robinson and Ricky Collins can replace Holt's production by committee, then the Wolfpack could lead the ACC in total offense again.

The question, as it has been for years now in Raleigh, is the defense, especially up front. The Wolfpack developed a strong young crop of linebackers last year and cornerback Lloyd Harrison was second in the nation in interceptions with seven. But the defense, as a whole, must play more consistently or the Wolfpack will find itself in its share of shootouts again—probably winning some and losing some. Sound familiar?

Offense Barnette, entering his fourth year as a starter, is never listed on any All-America teams and he won't get much attention for All-ACC. But he led the league in total offense last year and when he gets time and an open receiver, he can be a deadly college quarterback. It helps to have a talented receiver like Holt, who set nearly every ACC receiving record in his career before having his jersey retired in January. He was the sixth player taken overall in the 1999 NFL draft. This year, Barnette will throw to seniors Coleman and Hamrick and a bevy of young receivers. Coleman, sophomore Ricky Collins and redshirt freshman Koren Robinson all had five catches in the N.C. State spring game.

O'Cain, one of the ACC's top offensive minds, also has a strong ground attack this year, led by senior tailback Rahshon Spikes and sophomore Ray Robinson, who was the ACC Freshman of the Year while filling in for the injured Spikes. There is no tailback controversy, as O'Cain will make sure both Spikes and Robinson get enough carries.

The Wolfpack even has the luxury of an experienced offensive line, which returns three starters. One big hole is at center, where Keegan Weir must replace Justin Burroughs, a free agent signee with the New Orleans Saints this spring. The only other big questions come at tight end and fullback, two positions O'Cain has used with sneaky effectiveness over the years. There's very little depth or experience at those key positions, and the Wolfpack coaching staff made several switches in the spring to find capable candidates. Tight end is still up in the air, but the fullback slot looks set with Derek Roberts.

Defense The biggest problem the Wolfpack has had the last three years is finding someone to slow down opposing offenses up the middle. Spring ball was hardly a help to the defense, as players on the defensive front, the linebacking corps and the secondary all missed the spring because of injuries.

Defense is critical if the Wolfpack wants to improve on last year's 7-5 mark, which could have been better if the defense was not ranked 7th in the ACC and 64th in the

nation with nearly 375 yards allowed per game.

The defense still doesn't have much experience up front, though several youngsters made strong impressions last year in the linebacking corps. Edrick Smith, Clayton White and Levar Fisher are three talented, young linebackers who still have some growing and maturing to do.

The defensive line is a different matter. Coming out of spring, O'Cain wasn't sure who would step in to replace the two departed defensive ends. And in the secondary, Harrison returns with Tony Scott at the corner, but the defense has to replace both starting safeties.

Special Teams Kicking is a major concern for the Wolfpack going into the season. Both Scott Earwood and Kent Passingham have game experience. The trouble is they aren't very good. Passingham lost his job last year to a senior walk-on that O'Cain knew very little about, even after he helped win the Syracuse game. Passingham missed three field goals against Baylor, his only attempts all year.

Earwood averaged 37 yards a punt last year, but suffered through a stress fracture in his shin most of the season. Even more disconcerting was that the Wolfpack had three kicks blocked last year.

New One to Know All redshirt freshman receiver Koren Robinson has to do is replace All-America Torry Holt. That's a daunting task, but Robinson was one of the most impressive players in the spring. He returned the opening kickoff of the spring game for a touchdown and had 5 catches for 99 yards, all of which are Holt-like numbers.

Schedule No other team in the conference has a schedule as fun as the Wolfpack's. They open the season in the BCA Classic with a trip to Austin, Texas, to face former North Carolina coach Mack Brown. O'Cain has never beaten Brown.

Then, South Carolina comes to Raleigh in Lou Holtz's Gamecock debut. Holtz led N.C. State to national prominence and four consecutive bowl bids in the early 1970s.

Throw in another game in Charlotte against North Carolina, the Wolfpack's first-ever visit to in-state rival East Carolina, and a trip to Tallahassee to answer for last year's win over Florida State, and the Wolfpack's season could be the most entertaining to follow in the ACC.



JAMIE BARNETTE

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-4

NORTH CAROLINA

TAR HEELS

North Carolina stumbled mightily out of the gate in Carl Torbush's first year leading the program. The Tar Heels, wracked by injuries and unexpected early-season losses, lost their first three games, including upsets against Miami (Ohio) and Stanford.

The defense was shoddy and the offense—with prep All-America Ronald Curry thrown into action on the second play of the season by an injury to starting quarterback Oscar Davenport—was inconsistent and unable to score. Eventually, things turned and the Tar Heels managed to qualify for a bowl game by stealing an overtime victory over rival N.C. State in the last game of the regular season. Torbush and his crew then salvaged the season and a 7-5 record by beating San Diego State, 20-13 in the Las Vegas Bowl.

What did the Tar Heels learn from the struggling experience? First off, even though they have recruited talented players such as Curry and a number of others in several highly touted recruiting classes, there are still some major gaps to fill.

Secondly, other programs in the ACC are closer to catching Florida State now than the Tar Heels are.

Unfortunately for Torbush and his staff, there's no time to regroup and rebuild. There's been a big investment by the school in recent years in football, and expectations are higher than just getting a winning record.

There is plenty of talent on hand to succeed, but those players need some experience. With a difficult early-season schedule, those youngsters might get burned in the trial by fire, but that should help when the easy part of the schedule rolls around in mid-October.

Offense Curry knows, finally, that this is his team. The talented young quarterback, who split time with Davenport last year, never seemed comfortable with his role last year. He made critical mistakes at critical times, usually because he tried to take on too much responsibility. Whether he didn't trust his teammates or just wanted to live up to all the preseason hype, Curry seemed in too big of a hurry.

This year, with the return of two potential all-stars who sat out last year with knee injuries, the Tar Heels should have more weapons for a squad that finished seventh in the league in total offense.

If nothing else, Curry has a more experienced surrounding cast. The return of tight end Alge Crumpler (knee injury), perhaps the most effective weapon on the team, will diversify the offense. Plus, the return of wide-out Jason Peace (knee injury) gives Curry a talented target.

The receiving corps could eventually be one of the best in the league, with Peace and sophomore Kory Bailey, though a little depth would be nice. Chesley Borders, who won Most Improved Player honors this spring, should be the third wide receiver.

One of the key questions the coaches wanted answered in the spring was at tailback, where returning starter Rufus Brown battled Dominique Williams, who returns after a year off for academic reasons. They might get a challenge from incoming freshman Daniel Davis, who like Curry the year before, was the top recruit in the state of Virginia.

The offensive line, woeful at times in the last three years, is loaded with nothing but seniors, including former tight end Allen Mogridge, who moved to offensive tackle during the spring.

Defense Torbush's pride and joy—he was the Heels defensive coordinator for 10 years under Mack Brown—took some serious hits to its self-esteem last year. At one time, the Tar Heels were ranked last in the ACC in total defense, a far cry from the year before when they led

the nation in total defense.

The problem, primarily, was in the secondary, which broke in two new starting safeties and a new cornerback, none of whom were prepared for the intense attacking style that made the previous year's squad so dominating. The Tar Heel defense was also lacking in pressure up front, so during the spring Torbush went back to teaching a more zone-oriented coverage in the secondary.

Only four starters return on defense. Gone are first-round draft pick Ebenezer Ekuban (20th overall to Dallas) and All-America defensive back Dre' Bly (second-round pick of St. Louis). But the cupboard isn't completely bare. Torbush likes his linebacking corps, guided by senior monster Brandon Spoon and assisted by speedy sophomores Sedrick Hodge and Merceda Perry. There isn't much depth behind them, but that trio can get it done.

Up front, senior tackle Sherrod Peace is the only returning starter, but he is surrounded by some talented young players. Ryan Sims showed promise during his time last year, and Brian Norwood, Julius Peppers and Joey Evans will all be counted on to put pressure on the quarterback.

In the secondary, where the problem was safeties last year, there are few choices at cornerback this time around. Errol Hood and Anthony Anderson, two speedy but small players, didn't distinguish themselves at all last year and could be challenged by any of the six incoming cornerback recruits.

Special Teams The Tar Heels have one of the best kicking duos in the league with placekicker Josh McGee and punter Brian Schmitz both returning for their senior seasons. Schmitz was second to first-team All-ACC selection Rodney Williams in yards per kick last year, while McGee made 14 of 18 field goals. The return game should be set with Kory Bailey and Antwon Black returning kicks and punts.

New One to Know Dre' Bly's early departure for the NFL left lots of room in the defensive backfield for a couple of this year's six pack of freshmen cornerback recruits to earn lots of playing time. Look for prep All-America Michael "Rabbitt" Waddell to get a shot at the bulk of it. And if Curry falters at quarterback, red-shirt freshman Luke Huard, the younger brother of former University of Washington star Brock Huard (now with the Seattle Seahawks), could step in.

Schedule One of the biggest criticisms of the Tar Heel program during its decade of rising from back-to-back 1-10 seasons was its schedule, which has been typically so easy as to cast doubt on just how much progress the program has made. This year is no different.

Even factoring out the snafu that allowed Kent to back out on its game against the Tar Heels for a mere \$10,000 (which is how NCAA I-AA program Furman found its way onto the UNC schedule), this year's slate is one of the league's tamest, with a road trip to Indiana (4-7 last year) and a home game against Houston (3-8). In fact, the Tar Heels play only four teams that had winning records last year.

However, this year's league schedule is going to be difficult, because the Tar Heels start the season with rival Virginia, then play three of the next four games away from home. The lone home game is against Florida State. After that, because of giving up its open date to fit in Furman, the UNC plays three games in 13 days, ending with a Thursday night game in Charlotte against rival N.C. State.

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

LOCATION: Chapel Hill, NC

ENROLLMENT: 24,439

STADIUM: Kenan Stadium (56,000)

SURFACE: Natural Grass

1998 RECORD: 7-5

COACH: Carl Torbush

CAREER: 11-13; **HERE:** 8-5

BOWL: Won Las Vegas (20-13 over San Diego State)

LETTERMEN RETURNING: 48

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Ronald Curry	6-2	205	So.
FB	Deon Dyer*	5-11	255	Sr.
TB	Rufus Brown*	6-1	215	So.
WR	Jason Peace	6-1	183	Sr.
WR	Kory Bailey	6-2	195	So.
TE	Alge Crumpler*	6-3	260	Jr.
LT	Kareem Ellis*	6-5	312	Sr.
LG	Mike Gimbol*	6-4	310	Sr.
C	Ryan Carfley*	6-1	300	Sr.
RG	Bryan Jones*	6-4	285	Sr.
RT	Allen Mogridge*	6-4	280	Sr.
K	Josh McGee*	5-10	170	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Teto Simpson	6-4	260	Sr.
DT	Sherrod Peace*	6-3	270	Sr.
DT	Ryan Sims	6-3	300	So.
DE	Joey Evans	6-4	255	So.
LB	Brandon Spoon*	6-2	240	Sr.
LB	Sedrick Hodge*	6-4	230	Jr.
LB	Merceda Perry	6-4	250	Jr.
CB	Anthony Anderson	5-8	175	So.
CB	Errol Hood	5-10	190	So.
SS	Quinton Savage	5-11	195	Jr.
FS	Billy-Dee Greenwood*	6-1	185	So.
P	Brian Schmitz*	6-0	165	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Rufus Brown	534	4.0	3
Ronald Curry	419	5.2	2

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Ronald Curry	975	44.9	6	7

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Kory Bailey	38	363	9.6	4
Rufus Brown	12	87	7.2	0

KICKING
Brian Schmitz, ACC punting leader at 44.8 per punt
Josh McGee, 14 of 18 FGs, 30 PATs, 72 points

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Brandon Spoon	138	1 PBU, 3 pressures, 8 TFL, 5 sacks
Sedrick Hodge	89	6 PBU, 4 pressures, 11 TFL, 3.5 sacks
Billy-Dee Greenwood	78	4 PBU
Sherrod Peace	57	7.5 TFL, 3.5 sacks, 3 pressures

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Virginia	L, 30-13
Sept. 11	at Indiana	—
Sept. 25	Florida State	L, 39-12
Oct. 2	at Clemson	W, 21-14
Oct. 9	at Georgia Tech	L, 43-21
Oct. 16	Houston	—
Oct. 23	at Maryland	W, 24-13
Oct. 30	Furman	—
Nov. 6	Wake Forest	W, 38-31
Nov. 11	N.C. State (at Charlotte)	W, 37-34 (OT)
Nov. 20	Duke	W, 28-6

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	NC	OPP
Rushing yds per game	130.1	127.8
Yards per rush	4.8	4.8
Passing yds per game	198.6	219.0
Completion percentage	50.5	47.9
Net yds per game	328.7	346.6
Points per game	24.4	24.5
Turnovers	24	25

Atlantic Coast Conference

LOCATION: Clemson, SC
ENROLLMENT: 16,404
STADIUM: Memorial Stadium (81,473)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Tommy Bowden
CAREER: 18-4; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Brandon Streeter*	6-3	197	Sr.
FB	Terry Witherspoon*	6-0	252	Sr.
TB	Javis Austin	5-11	209	Jr.
WR	Mal Lawyer*	6-0	187	Sr.
WR	Brian Wofford*	6-1	170	Sr.
TE	T.J. Watkins	6-3	257	So.
LT	John McDermott	6-6	278	Jr.
LG	Theo Mougros	6-2	265	Jr.
C	Kyle Young	6-3	260	So.
RG	Gary Byrd	6-4	300	Fr.
RT	Akil Smith	6-4	272	So.
K	Tony Lazzara	5-9	181	So.

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Gary Chidress	6-3	265	Jr.
LT	Jason Holloman	6-3	274	Jr.
RT	Damonte McKenzie*	6-2	280	Sr.
DE	Terry Bryant	6-4	265	Jr.
LB	Braxton K. Williams	6-2	215	So.
LB	Harold Means*	6-0	223	Sr.
LB	Keith Adams	5-11	220	So.
CB	Alex Ardley*	5-10	165	So.
CB	Dexta Polite	5-11	180	So.
SS	Domarco Fox*	6-1	182	Sr.
FS	Robert Carswell*	6-0	208	Jr.
P	Ryan Romano	5-10	167	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Travis Zachery		635	4.0	4	
Javis Austin		279	3.9	3	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Brandon Streeter		1,948	53.2	13	14
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Brian Wofford		35	535	15.3	5
Mal Lawyer		31	464	15.0	3
KICKING		None			
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Robert Carswell		102	—		
Harold Means		94	8 tackles for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Marshall	—
Sept. 11	Virginia	L, 20-18
Sept. 23	at Virginia Tech	L, 37-0
Oct. 2	North Carolina	L, 21-14
Oct. 9	at N.C. State	L, 46-39
Oct. 16	at Maryland	W, 23-0
Oct. 23	Florida State	L, 48-0
Oct. 30	at Wake Forest	L, 29-19
Nov. 6	Duke	L, 28-23
Nov. 13	at Georgia Tech	L, 24-21
Nov. 20	at South Carolina	W, 28-19

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	CLEMSON	OPP
Rushing yds per game	120.4	104.5
Yds per rush	3.2	2.8
Passing yds per game	184.5	215.5
Completion percentage	52.8	48.9
Net yds per game	304.9	320.1
Points per game	19.8	24.7
Turnovers	29	18

CLEMSON TIGERS

There's only so much even a loyal Clemson fan can take. Following the Tigers worst season since 1976 with a 3-8 overall record and a last-place finish in the ACC, Tommy West was fired and Clemson scooped up the nation's hottest young coach, Tommy Bowden.

Bowden, son of legendary Florida State coach Bobby Bowden, comes from a well-known football family. He did no less than perform a miracle at Tulane, where in two years he compiled an 18-4 record, including last year's perfect 11-0 regular season.

Tiger fans, who always have high expectations for their football team, expect just as quick a turnaround. Unfortunately, Bowden's rebuilding process might take a touch longer. He will face much better competition in the ACC, where everyone is still trying to catch Bowden's old man. They all have a much larger head start.

And Bowden inherited a team that has only eight seniors, 11 starters and 41 lettermen returning, unusually small numbers for an ACC school.

Bowden sent an immediate statement to the relatively few players who returned for the Tigers in the spring. He had brutal practices that sometimes began at 5:30 a.m., presumably to toughen up what he considered a bunch of softies. He suspended the team's leading returning rusher, Travis Zachery, from spring practices.

It was a loud-and-clear introduction, but it seemed to have its benefits. Interest in spring practice was as intense as ever and nearly 17,000 people showed up for the annual Orange and White game.

Without a doubt, those same fans will be a little puzzled as to why the Tigers aren't in the Top 10 by the end of September, but that time will probably come. It just may take a little time to get there.

Offense They have said this before. Both Ken Hatfield and Tommy West came in as new head coaches and promised Clemson fans a more wide-open offense to go with the traditionally strong defense. Tiger fans, who were perfectly satisfied during the program's most successful years with the offense-impaired style of Danny Ford, have always been wary of such claims, mainly because Hatfield was run out of town just after he installed the wishbone. And West's time was up long before he opened the offensive floodgates at the end of last season.

This time is different, however. Bowden has apparently inherited his father's offensive genius for a wide-open style that features three, four, sometimes even five receivers. Last year, Tulane was the only Division I-A team to average 300 yards passing and 200 yards rushing.

Bowden had a quarterback duel going in the spring, but it's senior Brandon Streeter's job to lose in the fall, with sophomore Woodrow Dantzler chasing. Streeter proved to be effective when the West finally opened up the offense, passing for 887 yards and nine touchdowns in the final four games of the season.

He will have at least two experienced targets to aim for, seniors Brian Wofford and Mal Lawyer, who combined for 66 catches and 999 yards last year. They will be joined by a host of young players who want to make a name for themselves in Bowden's pass-happy style.

The Tigers seem to be set in the backfield, even though returning starter Travis Zachery, the team's leading rusher last year, did not participate in spring drills for disciplinary action. That gave Javis Austin more reps at tailback, while Terry Witherspoon remains the top choice at fullback.

The trouble is that there are a lot of holes to fill. For the first time in 56 years, not a single starting lineman is returning. During spring practice, Bowden turned the three sophomores and two redshirt freshmen that made up his starting unit into a leaner, meaner crew, paring them down from behemoth to just beefy. But even if they are smaller and quicker, the offensive line will need some time to mature, and so will the rest of the offense.

Defense One of the smartest things Bowden did when he took over for West was keep things the same on defense. Clemson's bread-and-butter for years. Last year, the Tigers were second in the league and 25th in the nation in total defense.

Reggie Herring remained as the defensive coordinator and will keep all the old Clemson schemes intact. Unfortunately, the Tigers lost some serious talent from last year's team, including first-round draft pick Antwan Edwards in the secondary and second-round pick Rahim Abdullah at linebacker. In all, six Clemson defenders were taken in the NFL draft.

While Edwards, an All-America selection last year, might be the hardest player to replace, the secondary has the most depth on that side of the ball. Not only does Robert Carswell return at strong safety, Domarco Fox is also back at starting free safety. The story of the spring, though, was the inspired play of sophomore Dexta Polite. He was really consistent in the spring and will start at corner, along with returning starter Alex Ardley (10 pass breakups in 1998). Polite's development allowed Fox to stay at his safety spot rather than moving to corner.

Up front, senior Terry Adams, a returning starter who missed the last three games with an ankle injury, will be expected to lead a defensive line that returns five of its top six players from a year ago.

The trouble is at Clemson's tradition-rich linebacker position. Chris Jones used up his eligibility and Abdullah went to the NFL a year early, leaving Harold Means as the only returning starter. Sophomores Braxton K. Williams and Keith Adams were impressive in the spring and are the leading candidates among a slew of young players at the position.

Special Teams The Tigers have no player who has ever punted or kicked in a college football game. That should make things interesting for a rebuilding program. Junior Ryan Romano, known mainly because he has the top grade-point average on the team, looks like he'll be the punter. Sophomore Tony Lazzara impressed Bowden during spring ball and looks like he'll get the kicking duties.

The Tigers should be set in their return game, since Lawyer had 14 kickoff returns last year and Javis Austin and Brian Wofford have experience back there. Travis Zachery will likely return punts for the second year in a row.

New One to Know Bowden has big plans for the offense, especially through the air. But for Streeter to be effective, he will need more than just two experienced receivers to throw to. Expect redshirt freshman Jackie Robinson to be on the receiving end of some of those passes, either from Streeter or Dantzler, who was his high school quarterback. There's also an opportunity for sophomore linebacker Keith Adams, who added 15 pounds since his freshman season, to step in and fill a massive hole at linebacker.

Schedule The schedule doesn't help Bowden's rebuilding efforts. The Tigers play only five home games, including a season-ending stretch of only two home games in the season's last seven weeks. Seven of the Tiger opponents went to bowl games last year.

All eyes will be on Memorial Stadium on Oct. 23, when Florida State visits Clemson and Tommy Bowden will face his father Bobby, the first father-son coaching confrontation in NCAA history.

But, as usual, the most anticipated game of the season will be against archrival South Carolina, which also cleaned house after last season, hiring Lou Holtz to replace Brad Scott, who is now Bowden's staff at Clemson. If that won't spice up a rivalry that has grown tepid in recent years, nothing will.

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

WAKE FOREST

DEMON DEACONS

Last season was finally supposed to be Demon Deacons' breakout year under Jim Caldwell.

After six years of building, Caldwell had experience in all the right places and some overly optimistic fans actually thought the school with Division I-A's worst all-time record, could actually be in line for bowl consideration.

For a school with so many football disappointments, last year was one of the biggest.

The Deacons, decimated by injuries early in the season, knew they were in trouble when they were splattered 42-0 at Air Force, a fact further confirmed when in back-to-back home games, they lost to Duke, which had lost an ACC record 21 consecutive conference games, and then to Division I-AA Appalachian State.

The Deacons ended the season with five consecutive losses and were a miserable 1-5 at home last year, as Caldwell became the first coach in ACC history to have losing records his first six seasons in the league. But few teams in the conference go into the season with a more optimistic outlook, thanks to the arrival of a single player: Charlotte quarterback C.J. Leak.

The Deacons pulled the nation's most stunning surprise on signing day, when Leak (everybody's high school All-American quarterback) chose the struggling Wake program over Notre Dame and a slew of other nationally prominent schools. "Really, he is the best prospect we've had the opportunity to recruit since I've been here," Caldwell said.

So there is a fair bit of pressure for Leak to come in and produce immediately, even though senior Ben Sankey will be listed as the starter going into the fall.

The Deacs still have a strong supporting cast, with 21 fifth-year seniors and a total of 15 starters returning (second only to Florida State in the ACC) for their final chance at that breakout season. Maybe with Leak on board, Caldwell's ship will finally come in. But it would be a fool's gambler who would bet on it.

Offense Whoever the starting quarterback is (Newsflash: Leak will get every opportunity to steal Sankey's job from the first day of practice), he will have plenty of protection and plenty of targets. The Deacons return four of their five starters on the offensive line and have seven receivers available.

Second-team All-ACC wideout Desmond Clark and quarterback Brian Kuklick are gone, the primary components of a pass-oriented offense that put the Deacons at No. 17 nationally in passing offense. Clark set nearly every school receiving record, while Kuklick did the same in passing.

The new quarterback will look to senior Jammie Deese, who caught 68 passes last year, and Marvin Chalmers, who caught 31, to continue that success through the air.

Deese was second in the ACC in passes caught last year, though he averaged a meager 12.2 yards per catch, while Clark caught all the down-field passes. He should get that chance this year, while Chalmers and Ira Williams and a host of others handle the other passes from Sankey or Leak.

In the backfield, Caldwell made some changes in the spring, hoping to improve on the nation's worst rushing attack. The Deacons were ranked No. 112 with 65.4 rushing yards a game last year. Caldwell moved Morgan Kane to fullback in the spring and will give Kito Gary and Chris McCoy the chance to fight for the starting tailback position.

On the offensive front, Caldwell needs only two replacements. He will use James Lik as the starting tight end, while starting center Marlon Curtis was moved to tackle to fill the only hole in the offensive line. Vince

Azzolina will take over at center.

If Leak, or even Sankey, pans out at quarterback, the Deacons should be better offensively, if they can get anything going on the ground.

Defense The Deacons are certainly experienced on defense. In addition to the eight starters returning from last year's team, three other players who missed most of last year with injuries are expected to be back and contributing.

Linebackers Dustin Lyman, who played in only five games last year, and sixth-year senior Kelvin Moses, who had knee surgery last August and never recovered, give the Deacons 11 years of college experience between them. The \$64,000 question is whether Moses' knee will hold up. Abdul Guice, another fifth-year senior, and Ed Kargbookorogie will vie for the other linebacker spot.

All four starters return up front, led by three-year starter Fred Robbins. Kelvin Shackleford returns from a knee injury and should wrestle with Kelvin Jones, who replaced him, for the other inside tackle position. On the ends, Matt Petz and Bryan Ray, a pair of converted linebackers, both return for their final year of eligibility.

In the secondary, leading tackler Dalawn Parrish is at the forefront of an experienced defense. The senior free safety will be joined by cornerback Reggie Austin, who led the Deacs in interceptions, pass breakups and fumble recoveries last year.

Having all that experience back will be nice for Caldwell, except that the Deacons finished last in the ACC in total defense, rushing defense, passing efficiency defense and scoring defense. It makes you wonder what kind of experience they got.

To be fair, the Deacons had to deal with numerous injuries last year and if the players who return this season can hold up, Wake should be better at stopping opposing offenses.

Special Teams Matthew Burdick, who was third in field goals made last year in the ACC, returns for his senior season after making 13 of 18 field goals last year and 24 PATs. He led the team in scoring with 63 points in 10 games. Redshirt freshman Matt Brennie is the top candidate to replace punter Tripp Moore, who was second in the ACC last year at 42.9 yards per kick.

Reggie Austin, who also runs track at Wake, should return punts for the second year in a row, while Jammie Deese will be the team's top kickoff returner.

New One to Know C.J. Leak, one of the top five quarterback recruits in the nation, shocked the college football world when he chose to stay close to home at Wake Forest and spurn an offer from Notre Dame. The Charlotte, N.C., native is the biggest recruit Caldwell has ever landed and will immediately contend for the starting job—if, of course, he hasn't already won it without stepping on campus.

Schedule Starting the season with an open date and then back-to-back road games, the Deacons don't exactly get a rousing start out of the gates. But with such an experienced squad, they have a chance to gain some confidence by starting the season at Army, then coming home later in the month for games against N.C. State, Rutgers and Maryland.

If the Deacons can go 4-2 in that opening stretch of games, they might be able to steal a couple more wins late in the season, and then a winning record is not out of the question.

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7

Atlantic Coast Conference

LOCATION: Winston-Salem, NC
ENROLLMENT: 5,892
STADIUM: Groves Stadium (31,500)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Jim Caldwell
CAREER: 17-49; **HERE:** 17-49
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 50

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	C.J. Leak	6-2	205	Fr.
FB	Morgan Kane*	6-1	220	Sr.
TB	Kito Gary	6-1	200	Sr.
WR	Marvin Chalmers	6-2	203	Sr.
WR	Jammie Deese*	6-0	185	Sr.
TE	James Lik	6-6	240	Sr.
LT	Marlon Curtis*	6-3	300	Jr.
LG	Brian Wolverton*	6-5	310	Sr.
C	Vince Azzolina	6-4	302	So.
RG	Sam Settar*	6-4	320	Sr.
RT	Michael Collins	6-6	318	So.
K	Matthew Burdick*	6-0	177	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Brian Ray*	6-3	245	Jr.
DT	Fred Robbins*	6-5	302	Sr.
DT	Kevin Jones*	6-1	275	Sr.
DE	Matt Petz*	6-3	255	Jr.
OLB	Matt DeOrio	6-1	210	So.
LB	Kevin Moses*	6-2	232	Sr.
LB	Dustin Lyman*	6-4	248	Sr.
CB	Chris Justice	5-10	193	So.
CB	Reggie Austin*	5-11	177	Sr.
SS	David Moore	6-2	197	Sr.
FS	Dalawn Parrish*	5-11	199	Sr.
P	Matt Brennie	6-1	180	Fr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Morgan Kane	454	3.5	2
Kito Gary	194	2.6	3

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Ben Sankey	468	65.5	4	2

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jammie Deese	68	826	12.1	3
Marvin Chalmers	31	438	14.1	2

KICKING
 Matthew Burdick, 13-18 FGs (long 53),
 24-25 PATs, 63 points

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Dalawn Parrish	75	10 TFL, 1 sack, 2 int.
Dustin Lyman	62	5 TFL, 1 sack in 5 G
Matt Petz	61	15 TFL, 6 sacks, 1 PBU
Fred Robbins	56	9 TFL, 3 sacks, 2 PBU
Abdul Guice	71	7 TFL, 3 sacks
Reggie Austin	26	4 int, 4 PBU, 3 fumb. REC

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 11	at Army	—
Sept. 18	at Virginia	L, 38-17
Sept. 25	N.C. State	L, 38-27
Oct. 2	Rutgers	—
Oct. 9	Maryland	W, 20-10
Oct. 16	at Florida State	L, 24-7
Oct. 23	Alabama-Birmingham	—
Oct. 30	Clemson	W, 29-19
Nov. 6	at North Carolina	L, 38-31
Nov. 13	at Duke	L, 19-16
Nov. 20	Georgia Tech	L, 63-35

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WF	OPP
Rushing yds per game	65.4	187.2
Yards per rush	2.2	4.2
Passing yds per game	286.5	213.6
Completion percentage	56.0	59.5
Net yds per game	351.8	400.8
Points per game	21.4	30.5
Turnovers	32	28

Atlantic Coast Conference

LOCATION: Durham, NC
ENROLLMENT: 6,272
STADIUM: Wallace Wade Stadium (33,941)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 4-7
COACH: Carl Franks
CAREER: 0-0; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 43

DUKE

BLUE DEVILS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Spencer Romine*	6-3	205	Sr.
TB	B.J. Hill	5-11	200	So.
WR	Scottie Montgomery*	6-2	195	Sr.
WR	Richmond Flowers*	6-0	185	Jr.
WR	Ben Erdeljac	6-0	210	So.
TE	Terrence Dupree*	6-4	245	Sr.
LT	Wes White*	6-7	285	Jr.
LG	Shawn Lynch	6-4	270	So.
C	Troy Andrew*	6-6	280	Jr.
RG	Robert Fleming*	6-3	270	Jr.
RT	Austin Smithwick*	6-6	265	Sr.
K	Sims Lenhardt*	5-11	185	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DT	Chris Combs*	6-6	275	Sr.
NG	Mike Steinbaugh	6-4	250	Sr.
DT	Gannon Shephard	6-8	280	Sr.
LB	Ryan Stallmeyer*	6-1	230	Sr.
LB	Kevin Lewis*	6-1	230	Sr.
LB	Brian McCormack*	6-7	235	Sr.
LB	Todd DeLamielleure*	6-1	225	So.
CB	Lamar Grant*	5-11	185	Sr.
CB	Ronnie Hamilton	5-9	175	So.
SS	Darius Clark*	5-11	205	Sr.
FS	Eric Jones*	6-0	185	Sr.
P	Brian Morton*	6-6	210	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
B.J. Hill	798	4.2	2
PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD
Bobby Campbell	1,199	49.0	6
Spencer Romine	862	48.3	3
RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG
Scottie Montgomery	60	793	13.2
Richmond Flowers	48	704	14.7

KICKING	TD
Sims Lenhardt, 16 of 22 FGs, 6th in NCAA with 1.78 FG per game	
Brian Morton, Averaged 40.4 yards on 73 punts	
DEFENSE	TKLS
Ryan Stallmeyer	85
Darius Clark	81
Kevin Lewis	78
Todd DeLamielleure	75
Chris Combs	47
Gannon Shephard	22
Ronnie Hamilton	28

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 11	at East Carolina	—
Sept. 18	Northwestern	W, 44-10
Sept. 25	Vanderbilt	L, 36-33 (20T)
Oct. 2	vs. Florida State*	L, 62-13
Oct. 9	at Virginia	L, 24-0
Oct. 16	Georgia Tech	L, 41-13
Oct. 23	N.C. State	L, 27-24
Oct. 30	at Maryland	L, 42-25
Nov. 6	at Clemson	W, 28-23
Nov. 13	Wake Forest	W, 19-16
Nov. 20	at North Carolina	L, 28-6

*at Jacksonville, Fla.

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	DUKE	OPP
Rushing yds per game	146.8	156.0
Yds per rush	3.3	4.2
Passing yds per game	192.6	192.4
Completion percentage	48.5	49.5
Net yds per game	338.9	348.5
Points per game	20.8	29.0
Turnovers	26	16

The Carl Franks era got off on a rather odd and inauspicious start.

The idea sounded good enough: The Duke administration wanted a stronger commitment to football, so Blue Devils athletic director Joe Alleva fired Fred Goldsmith after five years on the job and brought in Franks, an assistant to Florida's Steve Spurrier and a former Duke player.

But what Franks did after that was strange. Not only did he keep seven of Goldsmith's former assistants, he agreed to move this year's Florida State game to Jacksonville, Florida for a big paycheck.

This is a stronger commitment to football? It seems more like a scaling back, since Franks wouldn't even express any disapproval of the ACC-generated schedule that has the Blue Devils starting at least a week later than everybody else and finishing the season with three road trips in the last four weeks.

Too bad, because the Blue Devils seemed to be in line to break through this coming season. They have 21 starters returning this year: nine on offense, 10 on defense and two talented specialists.

It's probably not a bad thing to have some continuity in the program, but keeping seven Goldsmith assistants does not make a strong statement about Franks' commitment to change, and moving the FSU game is nothing more than selling out.

Offense One thing Goldsmith could never do was settle on a quarterback. Spencer Romine and Bobby Campbell went back and forth from under center just about every week for two years, because of injuries, lack of confidence and poor performance.

Franks, who learned scads from Spurrier even if his offensive coordinator title at Florida was mostly ceremonial, spent spring practice evaluating the bulked-up Romine, the 6-6 Campbell and redshirt freshman D. Bryant—with none earning a clear-cut edge going into fall practice.

Little surprise that Franks has installed a pass-happy "Airborne" offense featuring three wideouts, one very similar to the one Spurrier used when he led Duke to a share of the 1989 ACC championship.

The offense will surely make use of wide receivers Scottie Montgomery and Richmond Flowers, two talented athletes who had 108 catches between them. Unsung wideouts Kyle Moore and Ben Erdeljac both had strong springs and will have plenty of balls thrown to them in 1999.

B.J. Hill, who was converted from defensive back during preseason practice last year, rushed for 798 yards, ending any chance that he will move back to defense this year. He could get more yards behind an experienced offensive line that returns four starters and senior tight end Terrence Dupree.

Defense The Blue Devils took their lumps and bumps and bruises for two years with some of the youngest defenses ever fielded in the ACC. Now, this unit is chock-full of seniors who have been playing together forever. Nothing changed in the defensive scheme during the coaching transition, and Franks has had very little input on what is happening on that side of the ball.

The undisputed leader on defense is first-team All-ACC senior defensive tackle, Chris Combs, who has 18 sacks in his career. Behind him, the Blue Devils return all four starting linebackers, anchored by seniors Ryan Stallmeyer, Kevin Lewis and Brian McCormack.

The secondary is also intact, headlined by versatile strong safety Lamar Grant, who was second on the team in tackles last year.

Last year, Duke allowed only 348.4 yards per game, its lowest total since 1981. With essentially the same unit returning and a high-powered offense supplying the points, this could be a successful year for the Blue Devils, if the coaching change goes smoothly.

Special Teams The Blue Devils have always fielded strong kickers and this year is no different, with placekicker Sims Lenhardt and punter Brian Morton. Lenhardt, a senior who was a Lou Groza Award finalist last year, would be the best kicker in the conference if Florida State's Sebastian Janikowski wasn't around.

Lenhardt finished sixth in the nation by making 18 of 22 field goal attempts. He set an ACC record by making four field goals of 50 yards or longer.

Sophomore Ronnie Hamilton struggled as the team's punt returner last year, averaging only 6.7 yards per return. That experience ought to help him improve on those numbers this year.

New One to Know Redshirt freshman D. Bryant—yes, that's the name he prefers—got some attention this winter when he was a walk-on member of Duke's top-ranked basketball team. He may get more attention this fall as he battles with upperclassmen Spencer Romine and Bobby Campbell to become the Blue Devils' starting quarterback.

Schedule While the rest of the ACC begins the season Sept. 4, the Blue Devils wait until Sept. 11 to get started, when they travel to East Carolina for what should be a difficult game. The Pirates have always been the state of North Carolina's stepchild and thirst for any chance to beat one of their in-state brethren.

Home games against Northwestern and Vanderbilt follow, the rest of the schedule is reserved for ACC contests. Three of the team's final four games are on the road, so the Blue Devils will have to rely on all of their experience to survive that stretch if they want to win enough games to go to a bowl game.



SIMS LENHARDT

PROJECTED RECORD: 3-8

MARYLAND

TERRAPINS

It's time for Maryland coach Ron Vanderlinden to show some results. Entering his third season as the Terps head coach, Vanderlinden says his program is in line to show its most improvement to date.

"I feel like we are right on schedule as we build this program back to prominence," said Vanderlinden, who has gone 4-7 and 3-8 in his first two years at Maryland.

The Terps closed the gap in several significant areas statistically, but couldn't finish out some games with late leads. With a total of 17 starters returning, that could be a different story this season.

However, for the second year in a row, the Terps probably will be too dependent on freshmen and sophomores to realistically have a chance for a winning record. But a 5-6 record would at least show some progress. The Terps have serious questions at quarterback and in the defensive backfield that will have to be settled in the fall.

Like ACC brethren Virginia, Georgia Tech and Wake Forest, Maryland adjusted its coaching staff. Bob Heffner was promoted from tackles and tight ends coach to offensive coordinator, while former coordinator Craig Johnson will stick to coaching quarterbacks.

Defensive line coach Rubin Carter left to take a job with the Washington Redskins and was replaced by Levern Belin from Ball State.

Offense The good news is that an ACC-best 10 of the starters from last year's team return. But the bad news, as they say, is that 10 of the starters from last year's team return. The Terps were last in the ACC and No. 105 out of 112 in the NCAA in total offense. Their total offense average (278.3 yards per game) was not even close to league-leading N.C. State's passing average of 309.2.

So the Terps need production out of their more experienced players.

That shouldn't be a problem out of the running game, where junior LaMont Jordan has proved himself in two years as a starter. He was second in the ACC last year with 906 yards rushing and six touchdowns. Fullback Matt Kalapinski also became a more competent threat as a rusher and a blocker.

The key question is finding a quarterback. Randall Jones replaced Ken Mastrole (who has since transferred) midway through last season, but Jones' job is now in jeopardy. Redshirt freshman Calvin McCall impressed coaches running the scout team last year and true freshman Latrez Harrison is Vanderlinden's most highly touted recruit ever.

Hardly anyone caught passes for the Terps last year, but those who did could all be returning. Senior Jermaine Arrington was the team's leading receiver with 23 catches for 366 yards, while Moises Cruz Jr. was second with 15 catches. Jordan was next with 14, followed by tight end John Waerig with 12. There are serious doubts as to whether Cruz, the team's No. 1 slot receiver, will be back after he was arrested on misdemeanor assault charges this offseason.

Defense Being an old-style defensive-minded coach, Vanderlinden put most of his rebuilding efforts into getting the defense back in line with the rest of the ACC. The Terps did that last year, showing improvement on that side of the ball.

Unfortunately for the Terps, All-ACC linebacker Eric Barton, who led the league in tackles last year, and fellow linebacker Kendall Ogle are among the five defensive starters missing from last year. Barton was a fifth-round pick of the Oakland Raiders, while Ogle went in the sixth round to Cleveland.

That leaves a lot of responsibility for sophomore Aaron Thompson, who had 87 tackles last year. No one nabbed

the other two spots during spring practice, though there were several candidates, including Reggie Lewis, Monte Graves, redshirt freshman E.J. Henderson and South Florida transfer Kevin Bishop. Of that foursome, Henderson is a guy to watch because of his tremendous upside.

Up front, senior defensive end Delbert Cowsette should contend for All-ACC honors this year, while tackles Peter Timmins and Kris Jenkins are quality starters returning. The other defensive end is up for grabs, but junior college transfer Nate Rust is the leading candidate coming out of spring.

In the secondary, there is good news with the return of cornerback Lewis Sanders, the Terps' top defender two years ago who missed all of last year with a nerve problem in his shoulder.

Special Teams The Terps used three kickers last year to handle kickoffs, punts and placekicking. Two of those players are gone, leaving only short-yardage specialist Brian Kopka in the program. He made 12 of 18 field goal attempts last year, but did not make anything over 42 yards. Oklahoma transfer Brooks Renard, a non-recruited walk-on who will be immediately eligible, could help out as both punter and kicker. Sanders, if he is healthy, should also be able to return kicks.

New One to Know Two quarterbacks, redshirt freshman Calvin McCall and true freshman Latrez Harrison, could give incumbent starter Randall Jones fits, if either of them turn out to be as good as the hype. Harrison is Vanderlinden's biggest recruiting coup so far, picking the Terps over Syracuse, Georgia Tech, Auburn, Florida, Georgia and Alabama. He has the size, athletic ability and savvy to run the kind of offense Vanderlinden has wanted to install since he arrived from Northwestern three years ago.

Schedule The Terps should be able to gain some confidence during the first two weeks of the season, when they play Temple (2-9 last year) and Division I-AA member Western Carolina.

From there, however, things get tough, with a traditional rivalry game against West Virginia, a week off and then eight straight games against ACC opponents. November will be especially rough on the Terps, as they travel to N.C. State and Florida State, then end the season at home against Virginia.

For the first time in its history, the Terps will play a pair of Thursday night games, the season-opener against Temple and another against Georgia Tech.



RON VANDERLINDEN

PROJECTED RECORD: 3-8

Atlantic Coast Conference

LOCATION: College Park, MD
ENROLLMENT: 33,006
STADIUM: Byrd Stadium (48,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Ron Vanderlinden
CAREER: 5-17; **HERE:** 5-17
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 33

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Randall Jones*	6-2	212	So.
TB	LaMont Jordan*	5-11	216	Jr.
FB	Matt Kalapinski*	6-1	223	Jr.
SL	Moises Cruz*	5-11	172	Jr.
WR	Jason Hatala	6-0	173	Jr.
TE	John Waerig*	6-2	267	Sr.
LT	Brad Messina*	6-5	288	Sr.
LG	Mike George*	6-4	304	So.
C	Sam Marvis	6-3	244	Fr.
RG	Tim Howard*	6-4	303	Jr.
RT	Jamie Wu*	6-3	307	Sr.
PK	Brian Kopka*	5-7	166	Jr.

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Erwyn Lyght	6-0	212	Sr.
DT	Kris Jenkins*	6-5	293	Jr.
NT	Delbert Cowsette*	6-1	274	Sr.
DE	Peter Timmins*	6-3	257	Sr.
LB	Aaron Thompson*	6-1	226	So.
LB	Marlon Moore	6-1	220	So.
LB	E.J. Henderson	6-2	233	Fr.
CB	Tony Okanlawon	5-11	179	So.
CB	Lewis Sanders	6-1	200	Jr.
SS	Rod Little	5-11	195	So.
FS	Shawn Forte*	6-0	196	Jr.
P	Sean Starnier	5-11	185	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
LaMont Jordan		906	5.4	6
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD
Randall Jones		567	44.9	3
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG
Moises Cruz		15	183	12.2
LaMont Jordan		14	87	6.2
KICKING		Brian Kopka, 12 of 18 FGs, team-leading 58 points		
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC	
Delbert Cowsette		96	6 TFL, 3 sacks	
Aaron Thompson		87	9 TFL, 1 sack, 2 fumb. caused	
Peter Timmins		84	6 TFL, 5.5 sacks, 2 PBU	
Shawn Forte		64	4 TFL, 1 sack, 3 PBU, 1 int.	
Tony Okanlawon		39	3 PBU	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 2	at Temple	W, 30-20
Sept. 11	Western Carolina	—
Sept. 18	West Virginia	L, 42-20
Sept. 30	at Georgia Tech	L, 31-14
Oct. 9	at Wake Forest	L, 20-10
Oct. 16	Clemson	L, 23-0
Oct. 23	North Carolina	L, 24-13
Oct. 30	Duke	W, 42-25
Nov. 6	at NC State	L, 35-21
Nov. 13	at Florida State	L, 24-10
Nov. 20	Virginia	L, 31-19

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	MD	OPP
Rushing yds per game	161.2	159.0
Yds per rush	3.8	3.9
Passing yds per game	117.1	202.0
Completion percentage	45.5	53.9
Net yds per game	278.3	361.0
Points per game	18.4	26.4
Turnovers	23	21

INSIDE THE ACC

ACC
MINI-FEATURE

What Contract?

Want to know what a signed contract means in today's world of college football? Not a thing.

Two ACC schools found that out this winter when they were informed by outside institutions that games scheduled for this fall would be canceled.

Auburn pulled the rug out from under Florida State when it chose to pay a \$500,000 buyout clause rather than face the Seminoles, who played for the national championship last year. North Carolina was also burned, when Kent opted to pay a meager \$10,000 buyout and schedule a game with Pittsburgh.

The Auburn-FSU game was supposed to be a nationally televised Thursday night game on ESPN and would have featured college football's first-ever game between father and son coaches.

It was also considered a premium matchup for the Seminoles, who needed a strong opponent to keep its power ratings up for the Bowl Championship Series.

However, Terry Bowden, son of FSU coach Bobby Bowden, resigned under pressure midway through last season and Auburn didn't want to go through the embarrassment of having that story hashed over and over during the buildup and broadcast of that game.

The move angered Florida State athletics director Dave Hart, who wouldn't reveal his heated discussions with Auburn AD Dave Housel. It also angered ACC commissioner John Swofford, who sent a memo to all nine ACC schools asking "to seriously evaluate whether it makes sense to schedule Auburn in any sport. We just cannot conduct business this way. It is simply wrong."

Auburn administrators and fans didn't take kindly to the criticism, even though the move was essentially an admission the War Eagles had no chance against the Seminoles, who have the nation's longest home winning streak at 40 game. They basically told Florida State and the ACC to get over themselves, because the school fulfilled its buyout obligation.

The Seminoles, after receiving word from ESPN that the network might not televise their game against a lesser opponent, scrambled around to set up a game with Louisiana Tech. It's not a marquee matchup, but Louisiana Tech does have the nation's leader in total offense returning this year, quarterback Tim Rattay, to go against the vaunted FSU defense.

The game will be televised on ESPN2.

In a far less dramatic move, Mid-America Conference member Kent, which had a signed contract to play the Tar Heels on Sept. 18, paid its buyout and scheduled a game against Pittsburgh. What angered UNC officials, however, was that Kent never notified the school about the change. North Carolina found out about it after seeing a Kent schedule published elsewhere.

"In my opinion, that's a poor way of doing business with another NCAA institution," UNC athletics director Dick Baddour said.

The Tar Heels scrambled around and made a deal with Division I-AA member Furman, to be played Oct. 30 at Kenan Stadium. The move shouldn't hurt UNC much in the power ratings, since Kent was, after all, 0-11 last year.

However, it does force North Carolina to break its policy of not playing I-AA schools, which had been in place since the Tar Heels played Furman in 1992. A change in NCAA policy, allowing schools to count one I-AA victory every four years towards bowl eligibility, should mean the Tar Heels won't be hurt should they beat the Paladins, as they have in all four previous meetings.

■ **TEAM ON THE RISE:** Georgia Tech

■ **TEAM ON THE FALL:** North Carolina

■ **OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:** Peter Warrick, Florida State

■ **DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:** Corey Simon, Florida State

■ **MUST-SEE GAMES:** Aug. 28, N.C. State at Texas (BCA Classic); Sept. 11, Georgia Tech at Florida State; Oct. 23, Florida State at Clemson; Nov. 11, N.C. State vs. North Carolina in Charlotte, N.C.; Nov. 20, Florida State at Florida and N.C. State at East Carolina; Nov. 27, Georgia at Georgia Tech.

■ **MOST UNDERRATED PLAYERS:** Jamie Barnette, QB, N.C. State/Thomas Jones, RB, Virginia

■ **NEXT STOP, NFL:** Peter Warrick, WR, FSU; Jamal Reynolds, DE, FSU; Corey Simon, FSU; Chris Coleman, WR, N.C. State; Chris Weinke, QB, FSU; Sims Lenhardt, PK, Duke; Brandon Spoon, UNC; Elbert Cowsette, DL, Maryland.

■ **JOHNNY ON THE SPOT:** Maryland coach Ron Vanderlinden is in his third year of rebuilding the Terrapins, a process that is taking longer than he thought. The team needs to show some vast improvement on the field and in the ticket office. Vanderlinden isn't in much trouble, however: he has the full support of athletics director Debbie Yow.

■ **RECRUITING WINNERS AND LOSERS:** Wake Forest pulled off the recruiting coup of the decade when it snatched Charlotte All-America quarterback C.J. Leak away from Notre Dame, with the promise of staying close to home and immediate playing time. North Carolina considered losing top-notch running back Nick

Maddox from Kannapolis, N.C., to Florida State a blow to its in-state dominance, but the Tar Heels were able to keep N.C.-native Michael Waddell, who had been wooed heavily by the Seminoles. The Tar Heel class, again, was ranked in the top 20 by most experts. FSU had a small, but vastly talented recruiting class of 13, which was ranked in the top three by most recruiting services because it had 11 prep All-Americans. Virginia missed out on Julius Jones, the little brother of star tailback Thomas Jones, who ended up at Notre Dame, and Matt Farrior, little brother of former star James Farrior, who went to Florida. Both Duke and Clemson were hurt in their recruiting efforts by coaching changes. The Tigers' Tommy Bowden, however, was able to land some top talent in South Carolina, while the Blue Devils, Carl Franks learned from the outset just how tough attracting football players to academic-minded Duke would be.

■ **ODDS AND ENDS:** The Oct. 23 game between Clemson and Florida State will be the first time father and son coach against each other in NCAA history. The Seminoles are guided by legendary Bobby Bowden, while the Tigers are in their first year under Tommy Bowden, who led Tulane to an undefeated season last year. N.C. State quarterback Jamie Barnette has thrown for more yards and has more total offense than any other player in ACC history through his junior year. Barnette needs 2,474 passing yards to break the ACC record of 7,141 held by former Duke quarterback Ben Bennett (Bennett's now on the coaching staff of the Blue Devils). The ACC's season-opener will pit N.C. State against former North Carolina coach Mack Brown, who now coaches at Texas. Wolfpack coach Mike O'Cain has never beaten Brown. The ACC has had two teams in the top 10 of the final Associated Press poll in each of the last two years. The ACC has more bowl wins (81-75-5) than any other conference. The ACC is the only Division I-A conference to send each of its members to a bowl game this decade. In the last three years, the ACC has produced 15 consensus All-Americans from six different schools.



BRANDON SPOON

CHRIS COWAN/ALLSPORT

Big East

CONFERENCE

BY STEVE BRADLEY

PROJECTED FINISH

	CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1. Miami (Fla.)	7-0	10-2
2. Virginia Tech	6-1	10-1
3. West Virginia	5-2	8-3
4. Syracuse	4-3	7-4
5. Boston College	3-4	5-6
6. Rutgers	2-5	4-7
7. Pittsburgh	1-6	3-8
8. Temple	0-7	2-9

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Marc Bulger ^(a)	West Virginia	6-3	210	Sr.
RB	James Jackson	Miami (Fla.)	5-11	215	Jr.
RB	Shyrone Stith	Virginia Tech	5-8	203	Jr.
WR	Santana Moss	Miami (Fla.)	5-11	175	Jr.
WR	Latef Grim	Pittsburgh	6-0	185	Jr.
TE	Anthony Becht	West Virginia	6-6	265	Sr.
OT	Joaquin Gonzalez	Miami (Fla.)	6-5	290	So.
OG	Richard Mercier	Miami (Fla.)	6-2	290	Sr.
C	Shaun O'Hara	Rutgers	6-4	280	Sr.
OG	Paul Zukauskas	Boston College	6-5	306	Jr.
OT	Mark Baniewicz	Syracuse	6-6	290	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DL	Corey Moore ^(d)	Virginia Tech	6-0	212	Sr.
DL	Chris Hovan	Boston College	6-3	285	Sr.
DL	Damione Lewis	Miami (Fla.)	6-2	285	Jr.
DL	John Engelberger	Virginia Tech	6-4	269	Sr.
LB	Dan Morgan	Miami (Fla.)	6-2	220	Jr.
LB	Keith Bulluck	Syracuse	6-3	230	Sr.
LB	Nate Webster	Miami (Fla.)	6-0	220	Sr.
CB	Hank Poteat	Pittsburgh	6-0	190	Sr.
CB	Nate Terry	West Virginia	6-2	185	Sr.
S	Al Blades	Miami (Fla.)	6-2	195	Jr.
S	Pedro Cirino	Boston College	5-11	191	Sr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Shayne Graham	Virginia Tech	5-11	194	Sr.
P	Jimmy Kibble	Virginia Tech	5-10	189	Sr.
KR	Elmarko Jackson	Temple	5-11	205	Sr.

^(a) Offensive Player of the Year ^(d) Defensive Player of the Year

MARC BULGER



Big East Conference

LOCATION: Coral Gables, FL
ENROLLMENT: 13,842
STADIUM: Orange Bowl (74,476)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 9-3
COACH: Butch Davis
CAREER: 31-15; **HERE:** 31-15
BOWL: Won Micron PC (46-23 over N.C. State)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 47

MIAMI (FLA.)

HURRICANES

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Kenny Kelly	6-3	190	So.
TB	James Jackson	5-11	215	Jr.
FB	Will McPartland	6-1	230	Jr.
FL	Santana Moss*	5-11	175	Jr.
SE	Reggie Wayne*	6-2	190	Jr.
TE	Daniel Franks*	6-6	245	Jr.
RT	Joaquin Gonzalez*	6-5	290	So.
RG	Eric Schnupp	6-4	285	Sr.
C	Ty Wise*	6-2	285	Sr.
LG	Richard Mercier*	6-2	290	Sr.
LT	Robert Hall*	6-4	290	Sr.
K	Andy Crosland*	6-1	205	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
RE	Michael Boireau	6-6	245	Sr.
RT	Damione Lewis*	6-2	285	Jr.
LT	Matt Sweeney*	6-3	270	Jr.
LE	Quincy Hipps*	6-4	255	Jr.
WLB	Dan Morgan*	6-2	220	Jr.
MLB	Nate Webster*	6-0	220	Jr.
SLB	Michael Smith*	6-3	230	Sr.
CB	Markese Fitzgerald*	5-11	180	So.
CB	Leonard Myers	6-0	175	Jr.
FS	Al Blades*	6-2	195	Jr.
SS	Edward Reed*	6-0	185	So.
P	Andy Crosland*	6-1	205	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
James Jackson		545	6.6	5	
Najeh Davenport		387	7.0	6	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Kenny Kelly		433	54.8	5	1
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Reggie Wayne		42	629	15.0	4
Santana Moss		30	631	21.0	8
KICKING					
Andy Crosland, 7 of 11 FG, 51-of-55 PAT, 72 pts.					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Dan Morgan		150	10 for loss, 2 sacks		
Nate Webster		134	5 for loss. 3 sacks		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 29	Ohio State*	—
Sept. 4	Florida A&M	—
Sept. 18	Penn State	—
Sept. 25	at East Carolina	—
Oct. 9	at Florida State	L, 14-26
Oct. 16	Temple	W, 42-7
Oct. 23	at Boston College	W, 35-17
Oct. 30	West Virginia	W, 34-31
Nov. 6	at Pittsburgh	W, 38-10
Nov. 13	at Virginia Tech	L, 20-27 (OT)
Nov. 20	Rutgers	W, 53-17
Nov. 27	Syracuse	L, 13-66

*Kickoff Classic at Meadowlands

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	451.5 ypg	2nd
Total defense	374.0 ypg	5th
Scoring offense	36.5 ppg	2nd
Scoring defense	25.0 ppg	4th

(Rank is Big East ranking)

They may not be ready to contend for the national championship again yet, but several signs indicate Miami (Fla.) is on its way to being a major player in the big picture again.

First off, the Hurricanes were invited to play Ohio State in the Kickoff Classic on Aug. 29. Then, head coach Butch Davis went out and signed a top-10 recruiting class that includes between six and eight players listed as athletes. The resurrection continued through spring ball when the competition was so intense that several starters were being pushed for their jobs.

The caper occurred when Davis closed the second half of spring practice when several people, including some in Buckeye and Mountaineer gear, were spotted outside carrying notebooks and video cameras. And, as anyone who knows anything about Miami football knows, when spies are suspected outside of practice one of two things is happening: the Hurricanes are either going to be very good this season or they're going to be great this season.

"We're close," Davis admits, "But, I don't feel that we're completely back.

"The way this program operated for the 10-12 years was we had players winning the Heisman Trophy, Outland Trophy and being first-round draft choices, and, when those guys left the guys that replaced them were almost as good and you didn't see a dropoff."

We'll see how close this fall when James Jackson and Najeh Davenport step in for tailback Edgerrin James, the first running back selected in April's NFL draft.

The Hurricanes also must replace quarterback Scott Covington, fullback Nick Williams and right guard Diamond Neely on offense, but many of the pieces are already in place. The defense returns 10 starters and should flourish under new coordinator Greg Schiano.

Miami also has its swagger back. The Hurricanes play six 1998 bowl teams, including the second- and third-ranked teams in the country, and will get to see firsthand just how good they are.

"We're getting close to being a top-10 team," says Davis, whose team was ranked 20th in the AP poll and 21st by the coaches after going 9-3 in 1998. "If someone could guarantee me that every single player would be healthy for every single game, I think we could be a top-10 team."

Even with their share of bumps, bruises and beyond, the Hurricanes should approach college football's upper echelon this season.

"I really like the direction of the program," Davis says. "I like the work ethic of our kids and I like the way we're headed."

Who, except for maybe the teams on their schedule, wouldn't?

Offense Even with an all-new backfield the Hurricanes should be explosive. Redshirt sophomore quarterback Kenny Kelly takes over for Covington and will be blessed with an explosive tailback tandem, several big-play receivers and one of the country's finest tight ends. Kelly, who plays baseball for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays during the summer, has a strong arm and the ability to scramble.

James left his mark as the only rusher in Miami history with two 1,000-yard seasons, but the 'Canes aren't lacking ability or confidence. Jackson, a junior who gained 545 yards as a backup last year, talked during spring ball about topping 2,000 this season.

"James is very optimistic but I do feel that our tailback position is in very good shape," Davis says.

Redshirt sophomore Najeh Davenport also returns and the recruiting class boasts a couple of talented runners, including Walter Payton's son, Jarrett.

Kelly also has plenty of good-hands people. Reggie Wayne, the team's top receiver each of his two seasons, is recovering from knee surgery but is expected back. Other threats include speedy Santana Moss, Daryl Jones, Andre King and Aaron Moser at receiver and junior Daniel Franks, a two-time all-league selection at tight end.

Seniors Ty Wise and Richard Mercier are back to anchor the offensive line. Joaquin Gonzalez, the Big East Rookie of the Year in 1998, is back at right tackle and senior Eric Schnupp is the favorite to start at right guard. Returning starter Robert Hall is expected to battle fellow senior Robert Sampson for the starting left tackle spot throughout summer camp. While the starting o-line is pretty much set, Davis said depth could be a concern up front.

Defense If the Canes are able to find quality reserves up front, this unit could dominate. Three of the four starters are back, including talented junior Damione Lewis, at one of the tackle spots. Matt Sweeney returns at the other tackle and Michael Boireau is poised to take over at right end. Projected starter Quincy Hipps is coming off knee surgery which leaves some questions at left end.

You won't find many better linebacking units anywhere in the country. Juniors Dan Morgan and Nate Webster occupy the weak and middle spots, respectively, and finished first and second in the conference in tackles last season.

"They are playmakers with tremendous instincts and a nose for being around the football," Davis says.

Sophomore linebacker Chris Campbell has brought out the best in Michael Smith during a spirited competition this spring and either player will be a capable starter.

Miami did quite a bit of tinkering with its secondary last year and should be more stable this season. Al Blades and Edward Reed are entrenched at the starting safety spots, but there is quite a bit of competition on the corners. Leonard Myers, a returning starter, missed spring practice with a knee injury which allowed soph Mike Rumph an opportunity to get more reps and impress the staff. Delvin Brown and incumbent Markese Fitzgerald will compete for time on the other side.

Special Teams Davis hopes to ease the burden on Andy Crosland, who has handled all three phases of the kicking game during the course of his career. Todd Sievers, a good kickoff man, could also push Crosland for some of the placekicking chores. The Canes return their long snapper and holder and have big-time return ability in Davenport, King, Moss and Moser.

New One to Know Kelly. A lot is expected of the Hurricanes this season and it will be up to the sophomore triggerman to maintain his composure and lead the offense. He has plenty of ability, but there is no substitute for game experience. Playing professional baseball has not detracted from his efforts in the past, but he won't have much time to switch gears with Ohio State waiting in New Jersey on Aug. 29.

Schedule Let's put it this way, no one will confuse this year's Canes with the 1998 Kansas State team (whose schedule included so many nonleague cupcakes that it should have been sponsored by Hostess). Miami's schedule is brutal with three of the first five games against Ohio State, Penn State and Florida State, but it's also the kind of schedule a program on the rebound has to play in order to garner national respect. Miami also faces a tough test at Virginia Tech on Nov. 13, but has conference home games with Temple, West Virginia and Rutgers before closing with Syracuse in the Orange Bowl.

PROJECTED RECORD: 10-2

VIRGINIA TECH

HOKIES

Six consecutive bowl appearances can do a lot for a football program. Postseason games generate revenue for the school, attract the attention of potential recruits and raise the preseason expectations of coaches, players, fans, alumni and media.

"They used to say around here 'Can you get to a bowl?'" Virginia Tech coach Frank Beamer explains. "Now they say 'What bowl do you plan on going to?'"

C'mon coach, you can tell us.

With 15 starters and 53 lettermen returning from a 9-3 team that virtually everyone (including us) picked to finish fourth in the Big East, there doesn't seem to be a way the boys from Blacksburg will miss out on a seventh straight bowl bid this season.

And, with a little luck and slightly improved offense, it could be a big one. Can you say BCS?

"We're proud of that," Beamer says of his team's impressive bowl streak. "We're in very good company and I've always said that you judge a program by its consistency, it's not a one-year deal or a two-year deal."

Unlike the Hokie defense, which may return all seven starters from last year at defensive line and linebacker (if outside linebacker Lorenzo Ferguson is reinstated to the team after an early-May arrest). With or without Ferguson, this unit will be tough. Tech limited opponents to 284.9 yards and 12.9 points per game last fall and could be just as stingy this season.

"We've got some really good players coming back, but we lost some too," Beamer says. "The best part is having those people up front."

Tech's special teams were spectacular in nearly every phase in 1998 and if things settle quickly at quarterback, on the offensive line and in the secondary the Hokies could gobble up double figures in wins.

All of this early attention is new to Beamer and crew, including the preseason No. 13 tag hung on them by this magazine.

"We've never been picked very high and have always been fighting for respect," Beamer says. "Now, the key thing for us is to see if we can handle the expectations and prove we deserve to be where we are picked."

Offense The biggest question going into spring ball was at quarterback where redshirt freshman Michael Vick and junior Dave Meyer were the top contenders to replace Al Clark. It's Vick's job now. Vick has the speed to run the option plays and naked bootlegs much better than Meyer, but Beamer feels the Hokies will be OK with either one under center. "We've certainly got enough talent to be good there," Beamer says.

The same thing can be said about the backfield. Junior tailback Shyrone Stith gained 699 yards and scored eight touchdowns while sharing time with Lamont Pegues and could flourish this season. Pocket-sized tailback Andre Kendrick (5-7, 185) is currently running No. 2 on the depth chart, but he figures to get a run for his money from highly-touted redshirt freshmen Lee Suggs and Keith Burrell in the fall. The fullback position is also loaded with talent in converted tailbacks Jarrett Ferguson, Cullen Hawkins and Wayne Ward.

If that's not enough, Beamer said this year's group of receivers is the most talented he's ever had. Senior Ricky Hall is a proven big-play performer and Emmett Johnson, Andre Davis and Terrell Parham also return and highly-touted Andrae Harrison, rated the No. 8 receiver in the country by Super Prep, could contribute right away. Last year's top two tight ends, Derek Carter and Bob Slowikowski, are also back.

The Hokies have experience up front, but must replace the entire left side of the line. Matt Wincek could wind up replacing Derek Smith, a fifth-round pick of the Washington Redskins last spring, at left tackle and Matt Lehr

appears to be the answer at left guard. Keith Short and Tim Schneck are back at center and Josh Redding, who suffered a season-ending knee injury last fall, returns at guard. Junior Dave Kadela started 11 games at right tackle last season.

"I like the athletic ability of the offensive line," Beamer says. "It's just a matter of them getting used to working together and seeing how well they can pick up stunts and blitzes."

Defense In addition to returning almost all of their front seven, the Hokies bring back eight of their top nine linemen. Senior defensive end Corey Moore took the league, and the nation, by storm with 67 tackles and 13.5 sacks en route to first-team All-America and Big East Conference Player of the Year honors last season. End John Engelberger and tackle Nat Williams were second-team selections in the conference and tackle Carl Bradley could garner some recognition this fall as well. The defensive line-rich Hokies got richer when junior Derrius Monroe burst on to the scene in spring ball. He'll spell Moore and Engelberger often, giving Beamer three guys from the end position that can get to the quarterback.

Jamel Smith, Tech's top two tackler the past two seasons, returns at inside linebacker along with Michael Hawkes. They are backed up by special teams ace Ben Taylor. The major question is at outside linebacker because junior Lorenzo Ferguson, the Hokies' third leading tackler and pass interceptor in 1998, was arrested in early May and charged with four felonies and three misdemeanors. Ferguson has been suspended indefinitely, pending the outcome of the case. Taking his starting spot will be either junior Phillip Summers, Ferguson's backup who was planning to move to rover this season, or junior Tee Butler.

Junior cornerback Ike Charlton is the lone returnee in the backfield, but Anthony Midget has starting experience at corner and safety and Cory Bird will try and fill the void left by the departure of all-conference rover Pierson Prioleau, a fourth-round pick of the San Francisco 49ers in April. Another guy to watch for in the secondary is redshirt freshman corner Ronyell Whitaker. He's a hitter, a fact which shouldn't come as much of a surprise considering that he's the nephew of boxer Pernell Whitaker.

Special Teams They are, in a word, special. Nobody blocks kicks better than the Hokies and the return game has big-play capability with punt returner Angelo Harrison and Stith and Charlton bringing back kicks. Oh yeah, kicker Shayne Graham and punter Jimmy Kibble have both been All-Big East the last two seasons. All of the snappers, including Beamer's son Shane, also return. As for Tech's philosophy, Beamer says: "You make sure those teams are solid because any time you're kicking the ball, there's potential for big yardage." Nobody knows that better than last year's Hokie opponents.

New One to Know Vick. Replacing Clark won't be easy, but the redshirt freshman stands 6-1, weighs 211 and has all of the tools. Tech has enough talent that the quarterback won't have to win games on his own, so if Vick can limit his mistakes while learning the former prep star from Newport News could give Hokie fans plenty to cheer about.

Schedule You've got to like it. The Hokies play six games at home, including Clemson, Syracuse and Miami. The road course looks quite manageable with the stiffest tests likely to come at Virginia and West Virginia.

PROJECTED RECORD: 10-1

Big East Conference

LOCATION: Blacksburg, VA
ENROLLMENT: 25,000
STADIUM: Lane Stadium (51,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 9-3
COACH: Frank Beamer
CAREER: 118-82-4; **HERE:** 76-59-2
BOWL: Won Music City (38-7 over Alabama)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 53

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Michael Vick	6-1	211	Fr.
FB	Jarrett Ferguson*	5-9	207	So.
TB	Shyrone Stith	5-8	203	Jr.
WR	Ricky Hall*	6-3	201	Sr.
WR	Andre Davis	6-1	199	So.
TE	Derek Carter*	6-2	260	Jr.
LT	Matt Wincek	6-4	276	So.
LG	Matt Leha	6-2	275	Jr.
C	Keith Short*	6-3	268	Sr.
RG	Josh Redding*	6-4	309	Jr.
RT	Dave Kadela*	6-6	272	Jr.
K	Shayne Graham*	5-11	194	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Corey Moore*	6-0	212	Sr.
DT	Nat Williams*	6-2	275	Sr.
DT	Carl Bradley*	6-2	288	Sr.
DE	John Engelberger*	6-4	269	Sr.
LB	Jamel Smith*	6-2	233	Sr.
LB	Michael Hawkes*	6-0	231	Sr.
LB	Phillip Summers	6-0	195	Jr.
CB	Ike Charlton*	6-0	198	Jr.
Rover	Cory Bird	5-10	212	Jr.
CB	Ronyell Whitaker	5-10	181	Fr.
P	Jimmy Kibble	5-10	189	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Shyrone Stith		699	5.3	3	
Jarrett Ferguson		199	5.9	3	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Nick Sorensen		306	52.5	2	6
Dave Meyer		166	58.8	1	2
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Ricky Hall		37	650	17.6	8
Jarrett Ferguson		7	99	14.1	1
KICKING					
Shayne Graham, 22 of 32 FG, 37 of 37 PAT, 103 pts.					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Jamel Smith		99	9 for loss, 3 sacks, 2 int.		
Nat Williams		83	4 for loss, 2 sacks		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	James Madison	—
Sept. 11	Ala.-Birmingham	W, 41-0
Sept. 23	Clemson	W, 37-0
Oct. 2	at Virginia	L, 32-36
Oct. 9	at Rutgers	W, 47-7
Oct. 16	Syracuse	L, 26-28
Oct. 30	at Pittsburgh	W, 27-7
Nov. 6	at West Virginia	W, 27-13
Nov. 13	Miami	W, 27-20 (OT)
Nov. 20	at Temple	L, 24-28
Nov. 26	Boston College	W, 17-0

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

		TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	316.7 ypg	7th	
Total defense	284.9 ypg	1st	
Scoring offense	31.2 ppg	4th	
Scoring defense	12.9 ppg	1st	

(Rank is Big East ranking)

Big East Conference

LOCATION: Morgantown, WV
ENROLLMENT: 22,200
STADIUM: Mountaineer Field (63,500)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 8-4
COACH: Don Nehlen
CAREER: 191-116-8; **HERE:** 138-81-4
BOWL: Lost Insight.com (34-31 to Missouri)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 36

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Marc Bulger*	6-3	210	Sr.
FB	Anthony Green*	6-2	240	Sr.
TB	Alvin Swoope	5-10	205	Sr.
WR	Khori Ivory	6-2	190	Sr.
WR	Pat Greene	6-2	190	Sr.
TE	Anthony Becht*	6-6	265	Sr.
LT	Matt Wilson	6-5	295	Jr.
LG	John Conte	6-4	290	Sr.
C	Rick Gilliam	6-5	325	Jr.
RG	Terry Dixon	6-3	310	Jr.
RT	Tanner Russell	6-7	305	Jr.
K	Jay Taylor*	6-2	200	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Ryan Brady	6-2	255	Sr.
DT	David Upchurch	6-4	245	Fr.
NT	Osa Nosa	6-2	300	So.
RLB	Mark Thurston	6-3	245	So.
WLB	Barrett Green*	6-1	215	Sr.
SLB	Chris Edmonds*	6-3	230	Jr.
MLB	Kyle Kayden*	6-3	235	So.
CB	Nate Terry	6-2	185	Sr.
SS	Gary Thompkins*	5-11	200	Sr.
FS	Jerry Porter*	6-3	215	Sr.
CB	Perlo Bastien	6-1	190	Sr.
P	Jay Taylor*	6-2	200	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Alvin Swoope	283	5.2	3	
Anthony Green	88	3.0	4	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Marc Bulger	3,607	65.4	31	10
Brad Lewis	38	33.3	0	2
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Khori Ivy	41	658	16.0	6
Anthony Becht	29	393	13.6	4
KICKING				
Jay Taylor, 10 of 15 FG, 43 of 46 PAT, 73 pts				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Barrett Green	155	107 UT, 48 AT, 5 for loss, 1 INT		
Kyle Kayden	73	50 UT, 23 AT, 2 sacks, 3 for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at East Carolina	—
Sept. 11	Miami (Ohio)	—
Sept. 18	at Maryland	W, 42-20
Sept. 25	at Syracuse	W, 35-28
Oct. 2	Navy	W, 45-24
Oct. 16	Rutgers	W, 28-14
Oct. 23	Temple	W, 37-7
Oct. 30	at Miami	L, 31-34
Nov. 6	Virginia Tech	L, 13-27
Nov. 13	at Boston College	W, 35-10
Nov. 27	Pittsburgh	W, 52-14

*at Charlotte, N.C.

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	459.5 ypg	1st
Total defense	353.9 ypg	4th
Scoring offense	34.5 ppg	3rd
Scoring defense	21.2 ppg	2nd

(Rank is Big East ranking)

WEST VIRGINIA

MOUNTAINEERS

There are rebuilding years and then there are rebuilding years. With a grand total of no (as in zilch, nada and none) returning starters on either the offensive or defensive lines, this will be a rebuilding year at West Virginia, but fortunately for the Mountaineers starting over doesn't necessarily mean beginning at ground zero.

"On paper this is a real rebuilding year, but I hope we already have the materials in hand to put it together," says WVU head coach Don Nehlen, who begins his 20th season in Morgantown. "What do we have to do? I'll spell it out: We've got to do a tremendous job in developing an offensive line and we've got to do a tremendous job in developing a defensive front line—adequate just won't get it done."

Injuries limited the reps of some offensive linemen in the spring, but Nehlen hopes to have his troops ready for the Sept. 4 opener with East Carolina in Charlotte.

"We don't have to have a team this spring," Nehlen stated in mid-April. "I'm just worried that those kids don't have the experience that I'd like them to."

The Mountaineers will be a bit green in other areas, too. WVU will be looking for a new tailback after Amos Zereoue, the leading rusher in Big East history with 4,086 yards, jumped to the NFL a year early and a new pair of starting receivers with the graduation of Shawn Foreman and David Saunders, who both received all-conference recognition. Defensively, replacements for linemen Gary Stills, John Thornton, Kevin Landolt and Charlton Forbes will be sought as well as a new wide corner to take the place of Charles Fisher (now with the Cincinnati Bengals).

WVU will also have a new number behind center, but fortunately for 'Neers fans it will still be the same player—record-setter Marc Bulger who tossed 31 TD passes as a junior and has switched from No. 10 to No. 4, the number his father Jim wore as a QB at Notre Dame in the 1970s.

"The fact that we've got a veteran quarterback helps," says Nehlen, who expects across-the-board improvement in the Big East.

But having a super senior signalcaller isn't the entire solution.

"We can't ask him to do any more, that would be a mistake," Nehlen says. "When it comes time to leave it, he'll be able to leave it, but he's got to have some people blocking for him."

Offense Bulger earned team MVP honors while throwing for 3,607 yards last season and already owns 19 school records, but as Nehlen says—he must have help.

Zereoue's departure was not unexpected, so WVU had time to prepare and may actually have more depth at the tailback position this fall with Alvin Swoope, Notre Dame transfer Cooper Rego, Brannon Goins and redshirt freshman Avon Cobourne (who showed no ill-effects from reconstructive knee surgery) all in the mix. Senior Anthony Green returns to open holes at fullback.

Receivers Khori Ivory and Pat Greene have some starting experience and a lot of big-play ability and soph Antonio Brown flashed some of his potential by catching 23 passes as a true freshman last fall. Tight end remains in the capable hands of senior Anthony Becht (6-6, 265), who snared 29 spirals last fall and looks to have an NFL future.

The line suffered a crushing blow when mammoth tackle Solomon Page opted to skip his senior season

and go pro. Page was snagged in the second round of the NFL draft (No. 55 overall) by the Dallas Cowboys. Without Page as its anchor, the line will be young and untested. Left tackle candidates Matt Wilson and Lance Nimmo both missed time with injuries in the spring. Juniors Rick Gilliam and Tanner Russell both tip the scales at 300-plus and are leading contenders to start along with Wilson, Mike Enick, John Conte and Terry Dixon.

Defense Similar to the offense, many players are vying to move up in the defensive pecking order. Mark Thurston started four games at rush linebacker last season and ends Ryan Brady and Antwan Lake and tackle Greg Robinette also have experience. Osa Nosa, David Upchurch—who put on 20 pounds after the season—and converted fullback Wesley Ours could also see time.

Senior Barrett Green made a smooth transition from safety and led WVU with 156 tackles from his Willie linebacker spot last season. Junior Chris Edmonds and sophomore Kyle Kayden are back at the Sam and Mike positions, respectively, but other players like former fullback Corey McIntyre will be called on to contribute.

The defensive backfield has three starters back and will be bolstered by the return of Nate Terry, a first-team All-Big East choice in 1997, and safety Rick Sherrod back from injuries. Safeties Gary Thompkins and Jerry Porter are also back, as is short corner Scooter Davis. Sherrod's wounded knee allowed Lew Daniels to impress this spring. However, the surprise star of the spring was cornerback Perlo Bastien. The senior has been burned more times than an inexperienced short-order cook during his WVU career, but he looked like a new man this spring. "He was one of our most outstanding players all spring," says Nehlen. "I don't know what he's been drinking in his water. Let's hope he keeps drinking it, though." The popular theory in Morgantown is that Bastien was inspired by the success that former teammate Charles Fisher has had. Fisher, a second-round draft pick of the Cincinnati Bengals, is the same size and possesses similar speed to Bastien, who seems determined to put it all together as a senior.

Special Teams Senior Jay Taylor can do and has done it all in terms of the kicking game. The senior averaged 40.1 yards per punt, made 10 of 15 field goals and kicked off last season. Terry is a proven return man and Antonio Brown and Porter did a credible job in his absence last year. Donnie Lindsey and Rick Oleyear are also back as long snappers.

New One to Know This one isn't easy because of the number of candidates, but it has to be Wilson. The 6-5, 295-pound junior is the leading candidate to succeed Page at left tackle and protect Bulger's blind side. He'll have to adjust quickly to keep WVU's star from becoming too much of a scrambling man.

Schedule All things considered, it's not bad. East Carolina is a much easier opener than Ohio State was a year ago and WVU has six home games, including Virginia Tech. The non-league slate isn't overwhelming with ECU, Miami (Ohio), Maryland and Navy, but trips to Syracuse, Miami (Fla.) and Boston College should be solid tests.

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-3

SYRACUSE

ORANGEMEN

After losing their entire offensive backfield and having to replace three-time conference player of the year Donovan McNabb with a quarterback who—at most—has thrown seven collegiate passes, one might expect think the Orangemen would give their new players (and opponents) a break and simplify their complex pro-option offense to make the transition easier.

Guess again. Even with McNabb, fullback Rob Konrad and wide receiver Kevin Johnson off to the NFL as high-round draft picks, Syracuse has no plans of slowing down after setting a Big East record by scoring 468 points last fall.

"Not at all," ninth-year head coach Paul Pasqualoni says. "We're going full steam ahead with the Syracuse offense."

The big question is who will be the engineer with McNabb now learning Andy Reid's offense in Philadelphia. Sophomore Madei Williams, the most experienced candidate, played in seven games last season and was locked in a three-player battle with Troy Nunes and Dee Brown for the starting position heading out of spring practice. True freshman R.J. Anderson, a dynamic athlete from Milford Academy in Connecticut, may also get a look in August as Pasqualoni, as he did with McNabb four years ago, is willing to wait until the opener to name his starter.

Despite the devastating losses at the skill positions, the Orange return four senior starters on the offensive line, along with tight end Stephen Brominski and wide receiver Quinton Spotwood.

The defense took some time to adjust with seven new starters last season but should be improved this fall and the kicking game should be stout, as it always seems to be under the Teflon bubble SU calls home.

Still, with so many new faces in so many key positions it's difficult to judge how well the Orange will click offensively, even with an experienced line.

"There's a certain amount of rebuilding, but there are people here who have ability," Pasqualoni says. "With college football being what it is, every three or four years you're going to have to replace people and bring new players along."

That being said, it often takes those new players some time to equal or surpass the standards set by their predecessors and in the case of SU it may be a while.

Offense

The new QB doesn't have to, and probably never will, be McNabb, the No. 2 player selected in the draft last April. Syracuse needs someone to step forward and play smart, steady football and keep the turnovers and delay of game penalties, an all-too-common occurrence even with McNabb, to a minimum. The best-case scenario has either Williams or Nunes winning the job, moving Brown back to tailback and redshirting Anderson.

Although originally recruited as a quarterback, Brown has done quite well gaining 854 yards and scoring 15 touchdowns as a reserve running back the last two seasons. If he stays at QB, the tailback duties will be shifted to the young, but exciting hands, of James Mungro and Keon Walker. Fullback is a bit more settled with senior Nick Sudano, who has limited starting experience, and Kyle Johnson filling out the two-deep.

"We've lost a good fullback and a good tailback, but we've got guys that have played," Pasqualoni says.

There are also questions at wide receiver where Quinton Spotwood is trying to recover from a knee injury that ended his season after five games. An all-conference pick as a sophomore, Spotwood is one of the top receivers and return men in the country when healthy. The other spot could also be up for grabs between senior Jeff Lowe and junior Pat Woodcock. Maurice Jackson, a deep threat who caught 11 passes as a sophomore, could also be a factor if he is able to return from academic difficulties.

Up front is a different story. Senior Stephen Brominski, tackles Mark Baniewicz and Jeff Pilon, guard Bill O'Donnell and center Cory Bowen are all back for their senior seasons. Emerson Kilgore, a 6-3, 308-pound junior, could fill the vacancy created at right guard when O'Donnell was moved to the left side to replace all-league choice Scott Kiernan.

Defense

What a difference a year makes. In 1998, Orange faithful were lamenting the loss of seven defensive starters, including two first-round picks, now they're counting on the experience on the other side of the ball to ease the offensive burden.

"I think the biggest difference between this year and last year is there's continuity and people know where they are going to play," Pasqualoni says.

The tackle positions should be sturdy with Donald Dinkins and Rickie Simpkins, if Simpkins is able to fully recover from a left knee injury suffered midway through the season. Senior Eric Downing, a JUCO transfer, is more comfortable after a year in the system and will provide depth. End Duke Pettijohn led the Orange with 6.5 sacks last fall and is back at left end and sophomore Dwight Freney appears poised to take over on the right side.

Senior Keith Bulluck, SU's top tackler last year, took over in the middle last season and is back for his third season as a starter. Junior Morlon Greenwood returns at one outside spot and senior Vernon Banks, a special teams standout, will probably take over the other outside position.

SU had to do some shuffling in the secondary after losing safeties Phil Nash and Jason Poles to graduation. Ian McIntosh has been moved from cornerback to strong safety and sophomore Quentin Harris, who led the club with three picks last fall, steps in at free safety. Will Allen returns at one cornerback spot and speedster David Byrd, who started four games in 1998, should take over full-time this fall.

Special Teams

Senior Nate Trout showed improved range and connected on all 58 of his extra-point tries last fall. A second-team all-conference pick, he should continue to be a regular threat. Kickoff specialist Peter Ferris is one of three candidates for the punting job left open by the graduation of Doug Dunkin. Sophomore Chris Bokel and freshman Mike Shafer are the others. Johnson earned conference special teams Player of the Year honors but his loss in the return game could be offset by the return of Spotwood. Ian McIntosh could also replace his older brother Kyle as a top kickoff returner.

New One to Know

Anderson. He threw for 580 yards and six touchdowns in two games at quarterback for Milford Academy last fall after spending most of the season at outside linebacker and tight end. Prior to attending prep school, Anderson was a four-year starter at Plainville (Conn.) High School where he tossed 45 TDs and racked up 3,140 yards. The Orange would like to red-shirt him but if no one emerges as a capable replacement to McNabb, Anderson could enter into the picture sooner than they desire.

Schedule

Michigan highlights the list of non-conference foes, although Toledo and Tulane could prove to be interesting matchups in the early part of the season. The Orange must also travel to Virginia Tech and Miami, both of which will be difficult games. West Virginia and BC both come to the dome, which could help SU's chances for a bowl bid. SU also opens its home schedule with Central Michigan, which should help the Orange end snap its streak of five straight home-opening losses.

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

Big East Conference

LOCATION: Syracuse, NY
ENROLLMENT: 10,400
STADIUM: Carrier Dome (49,550)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 8-4
COACH: Paul Pasqualoni
CAREER: 102-43-1; **HERE:** 68-26-1
BOWL: Lost Orange (31-10 to Florida)
LETTERMAN RETURNING: 36

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Madei Williams	6-2	202	So.
TB	Dee Brown	6-0	206	Jr.
FB	Nick Sudano	6-1	240	Sr.
WR	Quinton Spotwood*	6-0	190	Sr.
WR	Jeff Lowe	5-11	196	Sr.
TE	Stephen Brominski*	6-5	256	Sr.
LT	Mark Baniewicz*	6-6	282	Sr.
LG	Bill O'Donnell*	6-3	291	Sr.
C	Cory Bowen*	6-4	288	Sr.
RG	Emerson Kilgore	6-3	308	Jr.
RT	Jeff Pilon*	6-6	290	Sr.
K	Nate Trout*	5-9	179	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
LE	Duke Pettijohn*	6-1	244	Jr.
LT	Donald Dinkins*	6-4	270	Sr.
RT	Rickie Simpkins*	6-3	286	Jr.
RE	Dwight Freney	6-0	247	So.
OLB	Morlon Greenwood*	6-0	230	Jr.
MLB	Keith Bulluck*	6-3	230	Sr.
OLB	Vernon Banks	6-4	210	Sr.
CB	Will Allen*	5-11	182	Jr.
SS	Ian McIntosh	5-10	172	Sr.
FS	Quentin Harris*	6-0	198	So.
CB	David Byrd	6-0	192	Sr.
P	Peter Ferris	5-8	172	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
James Mungro	365	7.3	3	
Dee Brown	299	5.2	7	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Madei Williams	84	71.4	2	0
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Quinton Spotwood	15	150	10.0	0
Stephen Brominski	10	131	13.1	5
KICKING				
Nate Trout, 12 of 16 FG, 58 of 58 PAT, 94 pts.				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Keith Bulluck	104	75 UT, 29 AT, 8 for loss, 3 sacks, 3 FR		
Morlon Greenwood	55	40 UT, 15 AT, 7 for loss, 3 sacks, 2 FF		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 2	at Toledo	—
Sept. 11	Central Michigan	—
Sept. 18	Michigan	W, 38-28
Sept. 25	West Virginia	L, 28-35
Oct. 2	Tulane	—
Oct. 7	at Pittsburgh	W, 45-28
Oct. 16	at Virginia Tech	W, 28-26
Oct. 30	Boston College	W, 42-25
Nov. 6	Temple	W, 38-7
Nov. 13	at Rutgers	W, 70-14
Nov. 27	at Miami	W, 66-13

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL RANK
Total offense	430.0 ypg 3rd
Total defense	326.8 ypg 2nd
Scoring offense	42.5 ppg 1st
Scoring defense	24.5 ppg 3rd

(Rank is Big East ranking)

Big East Conference

LOCATION: Chestnut Hill, MA
ENROLLMENT: 14,600
STADIUM: Alumni Stadium (44,500)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 4-7
COACH: Tom O'Brien
CAREER: 8-14; **HERE:** 8-14
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 51

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Tim Hasselbeck	6-2	211	Jr.
FB	Ryan Burch	6-3	246	So.
TB	Carlton Rowe	5-11	200	Sr.
WR	Dedrick Dewalt	5-9	169	So.
WR	Derrick Crittenden	5-9	183	Sr.
TE	Bryan Arndt	6-4	260	Sr.
OT	Darnell Alford*	6-4	323	Sr.
OG	Paul Zukauskas*	6-5	306	Jr.
C	Butch Palaza	6-4	287	Sr.
OG	Paul LaQuerre	6-3	305	Jr.
OT	Michael Cook	6-5	300	Jr.
K	John Matich*	6-2	203	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Adam Newman*	6-5	236	Sr.
DT	Chris Hovan*	6-3	285	Sr.
DT	Mike Willetts*	6-4	285	Sr.
DE	Adam Grace*	6-3	272	Jr.
OLB	Scott Bradley	6-2	210	So.
MLB	Frank Chamberlin*	6-0	239	Sr.
OLB	Nick Blevins	6-2	216	So.
CB	Jonathan Ordway*	5-10	176	So.
FS	Pedro Cirino*	5-11	191	Sr.
SS	George White*	6-1	200	Sr.
CB	D.J. Sutton*	5-8	159	Jr.
P	Kevin McMyler	6-1	187	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Cedric Washington	173	4.7	0
Carlton Rowe	21	5.3	0

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Tim Hasselbeck	140	75.0	2	1

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Dedrick Dewalt	13	140	10.8	2
Robert Ellis	9	99	11.0	0

KICKING
 John Matich, 11 of 17 FG, 32 of 32 PAT, 65 pts

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Chris Hovan	81	13 for loss, 5.5 sacks, 3 FF
Frank Chamberlin	78	45 UT, 33 AT, 2 for loss, 2 sacks

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Baylor	—
Sept. 18	at Navy	L, 31-32
Sept. 25	at Rutgers	W, 41-14
Oct. 2	Northeastern	—
Oct. 9	at Temple	W, 31-7
Oct. 16	Pittsburgh	W, 23-15
Oct. 23	Miami	L, 17-35
Oct. 30	at Syracuse	L, 25-42
Nov. 13	West Virginia	W, 10-35
Nov. 20	at Notre Dame	L, 26-31
Nov. 26	at Virginia Tech	L, 0-1

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	411.5 ypg	5th
Total defense	398.0 ypg	6th
Scoring offense	24.8 ppg	5th
Scoring defense	28.3 ppg	5th

(Rank is Big East ranking)

BOSTON COLLEGE

EAGLES

Ask coaches around the Big East what to look for in the coming season and almost all of them say the same thing: "Boston College will continue to get better."

The Eagles enter their third season of rebuilding under head coach Tom O'Brien with some huge shoes—mainly those of early-round NFL picks Mike Cloud, Damien Woody and Doug Brzezinski—to fill on offense and nine starters returning to a defense that ranked 98th in the nation against the pass last season.

With 51 lettermen returning and a strong recruiting class coming in, the goal for the Eagles this fall is better balance.

"I think a lot of it is being in the system," O'Brien says. "We were 28th in the country in total offense last year and I don't know if we can approach that this year, but we're not going to be ranked 80th in total defense again this year, either."

At least they shouldn't be. The defensive line, anchored by All-America candidate, Chris Hovan should be a strength. In fact, the Eagles should be strong up the middle. Frank Chamberlin made the successful move from fullback to middle linebacker last season and safeties Pedro Cirino and George White will provide experience in the secondary.

"For the first time since I've been here, we've got more than two seniors on defense," O'Brien says.

The defense will have to be better in order to help offset the loss of eight starters on offense. Cloud, a 1999 second-round pick of the Kansas City Chiefs, set a Big East record with 1,726 yards rushing last season and Woody, the 17th overall pick in the NFL draft, and Brzezinski, No. 64, helped pave the way. The Eagles also graduated their starting quarterback, both receivers, tight end and an offensive guard.

It may take some time for all of the pieces to mesh but BC appears to be on its way back.

Offense The Eagles aren't sure when they'll name Scott Mutryn's replacement, but they're hoping whomever emerges from the battle will be able to guide the program for the next couple of years. The top contender for the job appears to be junior Tim Hasselbeck, who had a real good spring. Junior Dave Robbins and redshirt freshman Brian St. Pierre are the other possibilities. "I feel that we have enough talent at that position," O'Brien says. "I'm just interested in seeing which one of those kids steps up and wins the job."

The tailback spot vacated by Cloud will most likely be shared by Carlton Rowe and Cedric Washington, although highly-touted recruit William Green, a prep All-America choice in several publications, may factor into the mix.

BC also lost its top six pass-catchers from last season but senior Derrick Crittenden and soph Dedrick Dewalt appear ready to take over the starting wideout spots with Steve Dapra, Kenney Gaskins and a couple of freshmen providing backup. Tight end Rob Tardio also graduated but the combination of Bryan Arndt, Robert Ellis and Mike Guazzo should be able to do the job.

The line is a bit more uncertain because, as O'Brien says, a "boatload" of people must be replaced. Butch Palaza is the favorite to replace Woody at center and returning starters Darnell Alford and Paul Zukauskas will get the nod at tackle and guard, respectively. A pair of juniors, guard Paul LaQuerre and tackle Mike Cook, could fill out the starting unit.

Defense It all starts up with Hovan, a two-time All-Big East selection who has all of the tools.

"I think he will be one of the premier defensive linemen in the country," O'Brien says of the 6-3, 285-pound senior. "He has a tremendous motor that never stops. He has the ability to come all the way across the field to

make a play and he's even stronger, quicker and more flexible this year than he has been in the past."

One of the keys to a better pass defense will be putting more pressure on the opposing passer as the Eagles had only 16 sacks last year. Senior Mike Willetts is also back up front and BC will look for contributions from Antonio Garay inside and Adam Grace and Adam Newman on the edges.

Senior Frank Chamberlin found a home at middle linebacker after being moved from fullback last season. Sophomore Andy Romanowsky also saw time in the middle last year and should contribute. Scott Bradley got valuable experience on the outside as a true freshman last year and Joe Mickens, Nick Blevins and redshirt frosh Jerome Ledbetter should fit in somewhere on the outside.

The Eagles have built up depth in the secondary for the first time in O'Brien's tenure. Cirino and White are solid at the safety spots and will be backed up by sophomore Carlos Moore, who filled in well when Cirino missed three games with a shoulder injury last season. Sophomore Jonathan Ordway got some serious on-the-job training at cornerback spot, starting all 11 games last season in his first year at the position. Junior Ramon Johnson and sophomore Dajuan Daniels saw increased time after D.J. Sutton tore his ACL last season. Sutton, a junior, missed spring ball but is expected back for the fall.

Special Teams Senior kicker John Matich has been a steady performer who enters the season healthy and should show improved range. Kevin McMyler lacks game experience but has a strong leg and was put on scholarship for the season. Rowe returns as the team's top kickoff returner but Jermaine Walker will be missed on both kicks and punts. Cedric Washington could fit in on kicks and Dewalt may bring back some punts. Sophomore tight end Josh Cervi could be the new long snapper.

New One to Know Green. The 6-1, 220-pound running back was one of the top recruits in the conference and could help ease the loss of Cloud. While Rowe and Washington are expected to battle for the starting job in camp, Green, a *Parade* and SuperPrep All-America, could emerge as the No. 3 man and climb the ladder as the season progresses.

Schedule The second half of the season is a bear, starting with a home game against Miami (Fla.) on Oct. 23. Three of the next four are on the road at Syracuse, Notre Dame and Virginia Tech with the only home date Nov. 15 against West Virginia. The Eagles only have five home games and play Baylor, Navy and nearby Northeastern in their other nonconference games.



PEDRO CIRINO

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-6

RUTGERS

SCARLET KNIGHTS

Big East Conference

LOCATION: New Brunswick, NJ
ENROLLMENT: 33,000
STADIUM: Rutgers Stadium (41,500)
SURFACE: Natural grass
1998 RECORD: 5-6
COACH: Terry Shea
CAREER: 22-32-2; **HERE:** 7-26
BOWL: None
LETTERMAN RETURNING: 48

Here's the safest bet in college football this year: Rutgers won't improve its record as much as it did last season. In fact, the Scarlet Knights—who went from zero to five victories in a single fall—would probably settle for half as much, if 2.5 more wins were a mathematical possibility.

Few thought of giving five to the Knights last season, but Rutgers showed its mettle by outscoring Pittsburgh, 18-0 in the second half of its sixth game to even its record at 3-3 and earn its first conference win in two years and first road victory in almost three seasons.

"That was a major turning point for us," says Rutgers coach Terry Shea, who begins his fourth season on the Scarlet Knights' sidelines this fall. Rutgers split its final four games to finish 5-6, the second biggest improvement in Division I-A last season. The players also began to believe in themselves along the way.

"I think what we have is an attitude, finally, in terms of some success," Shea, last year's Big East Coach of the Year, says. "I really sense that this team has turned the corner."

It will take plenty of work to keep headed in the right direction. Rutgers lost all of its top receivers and needs to plug some holes on the offensive line. The Knights' defense ranked first in the conference against the pass, partly because opponents rushed for 246 yards per game, but it was unsettled on the corners and needs to get some help for standout end Wayne Hampton up front. The special teams showed improvement last season and should be at least as good this fall.

Sometimes you need to step back before you can move forward again and that may be the case with Rutgers this fall. Duplicating last season's record will be difficult, but they aren't the doormat they once were, either.

Offense Junior quarterback Mike McMahon has only started 16 games but has already moved into the top 10 in several career passing categories at Rutgers. This could be the season he moves into the spotlight in the Big East. McMahon had size (6-3, 215) and arm strength last year and his speed has now improved (4.61 in the 40) after offseason knee surgery. His improvement this season will be marked more by maturity than statistics.

"He is truly our marquee player on the offensive side," Shea says. "He's almost 6-4 and moves around like he's 6-1. He just needs to cut down on the interceptions."

The rest of the backfield is stocked with talent, too. Senior halfback Jacki Crooks is the top returning rusher in the Big East (821 yards in '98) and converted halfback Dennis Thomas lends plenty of athleticism to the fullback spot. Depth will come from Kevin Sinclair, who flashed some of the skills during spring ball that allowed him to gain 5,384 yards during his high school career.

Losing receivers Bill Powell and Andy Holland and tight end Chris Hutton leaves McMahon without his top three pass catchers from last season. Senior Walter King, who missed last season with a back injury, should contend for a starting spot along with JUCO import Errol Johnson, sophomore Phil Douglass and three freshmen: Sean Carty, Antoine Lovelace and Ryshaun Conover. Sophomore Rob Ring has the most experience among the returnees at tight end, but the coaching staff is high on true freshman Greg Graves (6-4, 225).

The line will be built around senior Shaun O'Hara, a second-team All-Big East selection who will remain at left tackle after experimenting some at center during spring ball. That experiment ended because senior Mike DeLucia nailed down the starting center spot with his solid play this spring. The right side returns seniors Ben French at tackle and Iosefa Puaauli at guard. Junior left guard Rich Mazza was showing progress this spring until he sprained a knee. The injury forced Mazza to miss the last week of spring drills and the annual spring game, but he'll be fine by the start of the season. Sophomores Mike Esposito and

Dave Showalter will provide depth.

Defense Last year's numbers may not indicate it, but the Knights have nine starters back and are getting better. Hampton is an impact player up front, the line-backing unit is deep and fast and Garrett Shea, the head coach's son, lends stability in the secondary.

Hampton averaged 7.4 tackles per game and earned second-team all-conference honors. A strong pass rusher, the Knights will do everything they can to free him up to get to the quarterback. Left end Marcus Perry and tackles Ansel George-Shields and Mike Behl are all returning starters who will be expected to raise their level of play. George-Shields was slowed this spring by a shoulder injury.

"We need to find as much production as we can on the defensive front," Shea says.

Even with all-everything inside backer Aaron Brady gone, the line-backing position should be a strength. Dax Strohmeier and Jabari Moore, who were both ranked in the top 15 in the conference in tackles last season, are back this fall. Speedsters Wesley Robertson and Tarell Freney, who won Most Improved Defensive Player honors at the conclusion of spring drills, will both be looking for time on the inside.

Shea played cornerback last season but the coaching staff feels he's a better fit at free safety. Junior Ben Martin returns at strong safety after earning his stripes last season. There are questions at cornerback, where Shea and the departed Reggie Stephens accounted for all but one start. Sophomores Tony Berry, DeWayne Thompson and Robert Crenshaw and junior Riley Jefferson, who missed last season due to academics after a promising freshman year, are the top contenders for the starting spots. Jefferson fought through nagging shoulder problems all spring before finally deciding to have surgery in April. He'll be fine by the start of the regular season.

Special Teams All of the key pieces, except punt returner, remain intact from last season. Placekicker Steve Barone had a solid season for a true freshman and Lee McDonald emerged as a kickoff specialist adept at preventing opponents from breaking big returns. Punter Charlie Titus would've ranked third in the conference with a 41.6 average, but he missed three games with a broken jaw.

"We've got a nice solid kicking game that eliminates the X-factor in certain games," Shea says.

The Rutgers return game could be a factor in most games. Riddick averaged 22 yards each time he brought back a kickoff to collect second-team all-conference honors. Shea has good speed and may get first crack at returning punts.

New Ones to Know Johnson, Conover and Antoine Lovelace. With so many changes in the receiving department at least one of these recruits is likely to make an impact. Johnson, a junior, has the advantage of two seasons at Foothill College in California. He also enrolled at Rutgers in January and went through spring practice. Conover and Lovelace both have good size and were rated as the top scholastic receivers by the Rutgers staff.

Schedule California, Texas and Wake Forest replace Richmond, Army and Tulane on a nonleague slate that features Navy as the lone holdover. Rutgers went 3-1 outside the Big East last year and will be fortunate to break even this fall. The conference schedule seems balanced with home games against BC, Virginia Tech, Pittsburgh and Syracuse and road contests at West Virginia, Temple and Miami.

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE			
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT
QB	Mike McMahon*	6-3	215
HB	Jacki Crooks*	5-10	205
FB	Dennis Thomas	6-1	225
FL	Errol Johnson	6-2	205
SE	Walter King	6-2	200
TE	Rob Ring	6-3	240
LT	Shaun O'Hara*	6-4	280
LG	Rich Mazza	6-3	280
C	Mike DeLucia*	6-3	275
RG	Iosefa Puaauli*	6-2	310
RT	Ben French	6-4	315
K	Steve Barone*	6-0	180

DEFENSE			
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT
LE	Marcus Perry*	6-1	260
NG	Ansel George-Shields*	6-3	260
DT	Mike Behl*	6-3	275
RE	Wayne Hampton*	6-5	250
OLB	Dax Strohmeier*	6-4	210
ILB	Jabari Moore*	6-0	210
ILB	Wesley Robertson	6-3	230
CB	Tony Berry	6-2	190
CB	DeWayne Thompson	5-8	190
FS	Garrett Shea*	5-10	190
SS	Ben Martin*	6-0	205
P	Charlie Titus*	6-6	210

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Jacki Crooks		821	5.2	3
Dennis Thomas		418	3.9	1
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD
Mike McMahon		2203	51.8	12
Michael Jones		0	0.0	0
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG
Jacki Crooks		21	125	6.0
Tosh Riddick		16	291	18.2
KICKING		Steve Barone, 8 of 12 FG, 20 of 23 PAT, 44 pts.		
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC	
Jabari Moore		101	70 UT, 31 AT, 4 for loss, 1 sacks, 2 INT	
Dax Strohmeier		84	57 UT, 27 AT, 13 for loss, 5 sacks	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at California	—
Sept. 11	Texas	—
Sept. 25	Boston College	L, 41-14
Oct. 2	at Wake Forest	—
Oct. 9	Virginia Tech	L, 47-7
Oct. 16	at West Virginia	L, 28-14
Oct. 23	Pittsburgh	W, 25-21
Oct. 30	at Temple	W, 21-10
Nov. 6	Navy	W, 36-33
Nov. 13	Syracuse	L, 70-14
Nov. 20	at Miami	L, 53-17

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	328.6 ypg	5th
Total defense	427.9 ypg	8th
Scoring offense	18.7 ppg	7th
Scoring defense	34.2	8th

(Rank is Big East ranking)

Big East Conference

LOCATION: Pittsburgh, PA
ENROLLMENT: 31,776
STADIUM: Pitt Stadium (56,150)
SURFACE: Artificial turf
1998 RECORD: 2-9
COACH: Walt Harris
CAREER: 19-39; **HERE:** 8-15
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 41

PITTSBURGH

PANTHERS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Matt O'Connor	6-3	205	Sr.
TB	Nick Goings	6-0	215	Jr.
FB	Rickey Mendenhall*	6-0	230	So.
WR	Latef Grim*	6-0	185	Jr.
WR	R.J. English	6-3	205	So.
TE	Ben Kopp*	6-4	280	Sr.
LT	Mark Browne*	6-5	280	Sr.
LG	Bryan Anderson	6-5	290	Fr.
C	Jeff McCurley	6-5	290	Jr.
RG	Ethan Weidle*	6-6	300	Sr.
RT	Ryan Hansen*	6-7	295	Sr.
K	Nick Lotz	6-2	210	So.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
LE	Julian Graham*	6-3	250	Sr.
NT	Demond Gibson*	6-4	300	Sr.
DT	Mike White	6-3	275	Jr.
RE	Brandon Dewey	6-4	250	So.
SLB	Nick Cole*	6-2	225	So.
MLB	Ryan Gonsales	6-2	230	So.
WLB	Karim Thompson*	5-11	200	Sr.
LCB	Demetrius Rich	5-9	160	Fr.
SS	Seth Hornack*	5-10	195	Sr.
FS	D.J. Dinkins*	6-4	225	Sr.
CB	Hank Poteat*	6-0	190	Sr.
P	Greg DeBolt*	6-0	185	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Kevan Barlow	533	4.4	4	
Brandon Williams	394	3.6	2	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Matt O'Connor	174	35.9	1	3
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Latef Grim	60	906	15.1	9
R.J. English	12	137	11.4	2
KICKING				
Nick Lotz, 1 of 3 FG, 4 of 4 PAT, 7 pts.				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Seth Hornack	98	63 UT, 35 AT, 7 for loss, 4 INT		
D.J. Dinkins	83	49 UT, 29 AT, 1 INT		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Bowling Green	—
Sept. 11	at Penn State	L, 13-20
Sept. 18	Kent	—
Oct. 2	Temple	L, 33-34
Oct. 7	Syracuse	L, 28-45
Oct. 16	at Boston College	L, 15-23
Oct. 23	at Rutgers	L, 21-25
Oct. 30	Virginia Tech	L, 7-27
Nov. 6	Miami	L, 10-38
Nov. 13	Notre Dame	—
Nov. 27	at West Virginia	L, 14-52

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	321.8 ypg	6th
Total defense	348.3 ypg	3rd
Scoring offense	21.3 ppg	6th
Scoring defense	30.4 ppg	6th

(Rank is Big East ranking)

The University of Pittsburgh football program is turning in its old Chuck Taylors for a new pair of A's.

The Panthers, who have called antiquated Pitt Stadium home since 1925, will say goodbye to the old concrete structure on the hill by playing its final game there in November. The Panthers will move into their new offices and training site at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Sports Medicine and Performance Complex next June and, after a season of games at Three Rivers Stadium in 2000, begin play in the new North Shore Stadium—a state-of-the-art facility they'll share with the Pittsburgh Steelers—in 2001.

"The light at the end of the tunnel is what you've got to focus on," says Pittsburgh coach Walt Harris. "Things are going to get exciting around here."

The training facility is believed to be the first of its kind for football and playing home games in a brand new NFL stadium will be an impressive carrot to dangle in front of future recruits.

"This recruiting class we got was on a promise and drawings," Harris says of the 24 players who signed with the Panthers. "Next year they'll be able to see them."

While much of the optimism in Pittsburgh centers on the long term, Harris and his staff spent the offseason trying to put the pieces back together after the Panthers slipped from 6-6 in 1997 to 2-9 last fall. The Panthers return 17 starters from last year but will need to find a new quarterback for the third time in three seasons and need to address some questions in the offensive backfield and in the trenches on both sides of the ball.

Injuries also took their toll during spring practice but with a strong recruiting class and time to heal, Harris hopes the Panthers gather momentum heading into his third season.

"I feel like what we've done in terms of character, discipline, leadership and doing the right thing on and off the field that we're going in a positive direction," he says.

Although the Panthers' ship may be on course, it will probably take some time for it to reach its desired destination near the top of the Big East standings.

Offense

Harris admits it's a bit disconcerting to enter the season with another new signalcaller, but when building a program he doesn't have much choice.

"The bottom line is you've got to play the guy who can do the most to help you win," he says. Although a decision on the starter is not expected until late August, senior Matt O'Connor—the only candidate with experience—enters summer camp as the favorite but he will be pressed by junior John Turman and sophomore David Priestley, a transfer from Ohio State.

The Panthers ranked last in the conference at 2.9 yards per rush last season and will need better production from their backs. Nick Goings, another former Buckeye, was impressive during the spring and could start at tailback. Junior Kevan Barlow, the Panthers' top rusher in 1998, was kept out of spring drills because of an attitude problem. Sophomore Brandon Williams, who started nine games as a true freshman, and Amir Dew have talent and will spell Goings at tailback. Chris Feola, Mark Moothart and Rickey Mendenhall will battle for the starting fullback job.

The receiving corps should be strong if it stays healthy. Junior college transfer Latef Grim caught 60 passes and made first-team All-Big East during his first season with the Panthers. Former walk-on E.J. English was considered the top contender to replace Terry Murphy at split end before suffering a knee injury in the spring. Julius Dixon and Kenney Ketchen could also play bigger roles and the tight end position seems solid with seniors Ben Kopp and Kirk McMullen.

The offensive line was severely tested early last season but should be better. Jeff McCurley has been moved from

guard to center to replace Andrew Grischow, a three-year starter. Left tackle Mark Browne missed time in the spring with a shoulder injury but should return with fellow JUCO transfer Ryan Hansen in forming solid bookends. Right guard Ethan Weidle will enter his third season as a starter and redshirt freshman Bryan Anderson could move in at left guard. Anderson missed much of spring ball with a hip flexor injury.

Defense

Seven starters return to a scrappy unit that ranked as high as ninth in the country last year before injuries took a toll late in the season.

"Defense is going to be our crutch," Harris says. "We're not overly talented but we play hard, we play disciplined and we put pressure on people."

Cornerback Hank Poteat emerged as the marquee player on defense last season, his first full campaign on that side of the ball, by grabbing six interceptions and breaking up eight passes to earn All-Big East accolades. Seniors Seth Hornack and D.J. Dinkins return at the safety positions to give the Panthers three proven players in the secondary. Redshirt freshman Demetrius Rich had a strong spring and could earn the starting job at left cornerback.

The defensive line returns two starters in rush end Julian Graham and nose tackle Demond Gibson. Several players were tried at the other defensive end spot in the spring and letterwinner Mike White leads the candidates at tackle.

The linebacking corps lost all-conference pick Phil Clarke to graduation, but should still be strong. Sophomore Ryan Gonsales looks like the heir apparent to Clark in the middle and Karim Thompson, who started all 11 games at the weakside position last year, returns along with Nick Cole and Amir Purifoy, who shared time at the strongside linebacker spot.

Special Teams

After going through three placekickers last fall, the Panthers will be looking for more consistency. Sophomore Nick Lotz was the only kicker in camp and appears to be the answer, although Harris plans to look for more depth. Senior Greg DeBolt returns to punt and built up his confidence a bit by spending some time on the wrestling team last winter. Poteat, Chiffon Allen and Tim Stein are legitimate threats to go the distance as returners and John Parker and Kirk McMullen are solid long snappers.

New One to Know

Goings. After gaining 5,785 yards and scoring 82 touchdowns in an outstanding prep career, Goings signed with Ohio State and made his debut against the Panthers in 1996, gaining 54 yards for the Buckeyes before suffering an injury. He transferred to Pitt to reunite with Harris and had to sit out last season. The Pittsburgh coaches like the effort and ability of the 6-0, 215-pound junior from Dublin, Ohio, and hope he can bolster their sagging running game. "I like him because of his work ethic and the kind of kid he is," Harris says. "He brings it to the table every game."

Schedule

The Panthers play seven home games for the second straight season and the Pitt Stadium Farewell Tour won't be filled with cream puffs as Virginia Tech, Miami (Fla.) and Notre Dame invade the Steel City on consecutive weekends late in the year. Pittsburgh plays at Penn State in Week Two, but could still get out of the gate quickly with home dates against Bowling Green, Kent and Temple. Things will probably get more difficult after that because the rest of the 1999 schedule does not include one team the Panthers beat last season.

PROJECTED RECORD: 3-8

TEMPLE

OWLS

Bobby Wallace and his staff made more moves than Allied Van Lines last fall—switching players from offense to defense and sometimes back again during his first season on the Temple sidelines.

Plenty of growing pains accompanied the changes, but Wallace feels he now has the program pointed in a positive direction with several experienced young players and recruits who can contribute almost immediately.

"The biggest thing is to make the changes and get it right," Wallace says. "And that's what we're doing now."

Two of the most productive switches were moving starting quarterback Kevin Harvey to cornerback and reserve tight end Raheem Brock to defensive end later in the season. Both flourished in their new positions after the Owls dropped their first six games by an average score of 33-21.

"The first part of the year we were a terrible football team, we didn't have any of the intangibles," Wallace says.

But a funny thing happened on the way to 0-11. The Owls regrouped, made changes and won two conference games on the road in the second half of the season, including a monumental upset of Virginia Tech on Oct. 17 in Blacksburg. The turning point came late in a 37-7 loss to West Virginia at Veterans Stadium the week before, according to Wallace.

"When I looked out on the field in the fourth quarter of the West Virginia game and saw seven freshmen on the field and the way that they were playing, I started liking this football team," Wallace says.

Although he realizes there's a lot of work to do, particularly in the passing game, Wallace is fond of the 1999 bunch, too. He also likes the fact Temple will open the fall with a new practice facility complete with an extra grass field, a 50-yard AstroTurf surface and a new building for the football offices as well as training and locker rooms. The changes went a long way toward keeping the man brought in to rebuild the program from flying the Owls' nest after one season in Philadelphia.

"It was very important to me to see the administration make the commitment to the football program with the campus going through such a boom," Wallace says.

He acknowledges it will take a great deal of dedication and patience, but Wallace is optimistic his football team can enjoy similar growth in the future.

"We've got a long way to go to get to the top of the Big East," Wallace says, "but I feel we can be competitive in the Big East within a couple of years."

Offense Temple had the third-best rushing offense in the conference last season but its paltry passing attack averaged just 116.4 yards per game, prompting Wallace to assume the role of offensive coordinator this season. Wallace visited Kentucky coach Hal Mumme during the offseason and the Owls will look to use more multiple formations, a la Mumme's Wildcats, to spread the field and use their athleticism.

Devin Scott, who directed the Virginia Tech upset as a true freshman, will likely open the season as the starting quarterback. He possesses a strong arm and excellent escapability. Fellow sophomore Mac DeVito could also factor into the mix.

The Owls have one proven target in pocket-sized flanker Carlos Johnson (5-9, 167), who averaged a TD every three catches in 1998 (18 catches, 6 TDs). Obviously, he needs more touches. Speedy junior Jerry Butler started four games last season and should be more of a force at split end this fall. Senior Joe Khamis returns to start at tight end. The running game returns senior tailback Elmarko Jackson, who endured an injury-plagued 1998 but has drawn rave reviews from Wallace, the man who once landed Bo Jackson as a recruit for Auburn. "Besides Bo, I see more talent in Elmarko than in any running back I've been around," states Wallace, who has coached college football for 20 years.

Senior Marcus Godfrey can play both backfield posi-

tions and soph Jason McKie showed promise at fullback while earning four starts last fall.

The Owls have good size but little proven depth up front. Senior Terrence Matthews will replace the departed three-year starter Charlie Morris at center and both Konrad Dean and Tim Leach have experience at the tackle spots. Guard Theo Ross is the only returning player to start all 11 games last season and the other guard spot will be filled by either Shane Holmes or Rick Williams.

Defense Temple is young and athletic and returns seven starters to a unit that gave up just over 400 yards per game. The biggest improvement this fall may be the speed up front and the biggest question mark appears to be the secondary where two starters, including leading tackler Jerry Urias will need to be replaced.

The defensive end positions look solid with Brock, a solid pass rusher with good bloodlines (his dad, Zachary Dixon, played in the NFL), and Tyrone Ditzel, who is a bit undersized at 230 but has gained 25 pounds since last season. Senior strongman Peppi Pichette (unheard-of 585-pound bench press) and junior Mathias Nkwenti head the candidates at tackle, a group that could include Mario Ayala if the NCAA grants him a sixth year of eligibility.

The Owls have seven letterwinners, all sophomores and juniors, back at linebacker. Junior LeVar Talley leads the way in the middle. Damian Jones returns at the will position. Leon Gray and Jason Davis will fight to start on the strong side and Akeiff Staples and Chris Pitt could see time in the middle or at the sam position.

Harvey has emerged as an honors candidate at right corner after playing the final four games there and breaking up four passes and making 18 tackles. "He's just a natural athlete and a natural football player," Wallace says. "The first day we put him over on defense he looked like he'd been there all season."

The other budding star in the secondary is sophomore Chonn Lacey, who will play what Wallace calls the "Owl-back" (a roverback position which combines both linebacker and safety responsibilities). Seniors Leon Washington and Teddy Friar will battle to start on the left corner. Sean Martin, a solid reserve last season, is in line to take over the strong safety spot vacated by Urias. Freshman Dante Coles could have an immediate impact in the secondary.

Special Teams There aren't any people with less college football experience than those who will kick and punt for Temple this fall. Dave Nicholl handled both duties last fall and Bart Chasler had the inside track during spring practice, but both jobs will not be decided until freshman kicker Cap Poklemba and frosh punter Gavin Ringwelski arrive this summer. The return game could be explosive with Jackson, a second team All-Big East pick, back along with Harvey and Johnson. Long snapper Kevin Czaban also returns.

New One to Know Pick a kicker, any kicker. Chasler, a redshirt freshman has the most experience, which isn't saying much. Dan McManamon and George Radu are two returnees in the running for the punting job and Scott Liddle, Kevin Burgess and Ian Hincken were challenging for the placekicking job in the spring. Things could get even more interesting in the summer when Gavin Ringwelski and Cap Poklemba, two recruits who both kick and punt, report to camp.

Schedule With only four home games and road contests at Kansas State, Miami (Fla.), West Virginia and Syracuse it doesn't look fun. The Owls open with Maryland at Franklin Field on Sept. 2 and don't play another home game until Boston College comes to town Oct. 9.

PROJECTED RECORD: 2-9

Big East Conference

LOCATION: Philadelphia, PA
ENROLLMENT: 30,000
STADIUM: Veterans Stadium (66,592)
SURFACE: Artificial turf
1998 RECORD: 2-9
COACH: Bobby Wallace
CAREER: 84-45-1; **HERE:** 2-9
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 42

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Devin Scott*	6-1	200	So.
RB	Elmarko Jackson*	5-11	205	Sr.
FB	Jason McKie*	5-11	225	So.
FL	Carlos Johnson*	5-9	167	So.
SE	Jerry Butler*	6-0	185	Jr.
TE	Joe Khamis*	6-2	250	Sr.
OT	Konrad Dean*	6-4	304	Jr.
OG	Theo Ross*	6-4	287	Sr.
C	Terrence Matthews	6-4	275	Sr.
OG	Rick Williams	6-2	292	Sr.
OT	Tim Leach*	6-8	320	Sr.
K	Cap Poklemba	5-11	175	Fr.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Raheem Brock*	6-4	255	Jr.
DT	Peppi Pichette*	6-4	272	Sr.
DT	Mathias Nkwenti	6-4	272	Jr.
DE	Tyrone Ditzel*	6-3	230	So.
WLB	Damian Jones*	6-0	195	Jr.
MLB	LeVar Talley*	5-11	225	Jr.
SLB	Leon Gray*	6-1	215	So.
CB	Kevin Harvey	5-11	195	Sr.
CB	Leon Washington	6-0	180	Sr.
ROV	Chonn Lacey*	6-2	195	So.
SS	Sean Martin	6-0	195	Sr.
P	Gavin Ringwelski	6-5	200	Fr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Elmarko Jackson		216	3.7	0	
Jason McKie		201	3.5	3	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Devin Scott		459	36.2	3	3
Greg Muckerson		299	37.3	3	2
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Carlos Johnson		18	378	21.0	6
Joe Khamis		9	102	11.3	0
KICKING		None			
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Taylor Suman		99	56 UT, 43 AT, 1 sack		
LeVar Talley		65	40 UT, 25 AT, 4 for losses		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 2	Maryland*	L, 20-30
Sept. 11	at Kansas State	—
Sept. 18	at Akron	L, 28-35
Sept. 25	at Marshall	—
Oct. 2	at Pittsburgh	W, 34-33
Oct. 9	Boston College	L, 7-31
Oct. 16	at Miami	L, 7-42
Oct. 23	at West Virginia	L, 7-37
Oct. 30	Rutgers	L, 10-21
Nov. 6	at Syracuse	L, 7-38
Nov. 20	Virginia Tech	W, 28-24

*at Franklin Field

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	313.3 ypg	8th
Total defense	404.1 ypg	7th
Scoring offense	18.0 ppg	8th
Scoring defense	32.7 ppg	7th

(Rank is Big East ranking)

INSIDE THE BIG EAST

BIG EAST MINI-FEATURE

Star Search is On

The Big East may not have been home to the best college football in the country the last few years, but it did feature some of the nation's best players.

The league may undergo quite a transformation this season after watching so many high-profile players move on to the literally greener pasture of the NFL. So with McNabb in Philly, James in Indianapolis, Woody at home with the Pats, Johnson rocking Cleveland, Konrad touching down in Miami, Cloud cover in Kansas City and Amos looking to be famous in Big D, it's time to welcome a new cast of characters to the stage.

"I think the conference has a real chance to re-establish itself with a lot of new stars coming up," says Rutgers coach Terry Shea.

Only two teams, West Virginia and Rutgers, return quarterbacks who started the majority of last year's games but that doesn't mean there won't be excitement.

First the QBs. Kenny Kelly has a real chance to shine in Miami and Madei Williams could be the man to replace McNabb at Syracuse and Michael Vick may make a good first impression in Blacksburg. BC and Pittsburgh appear ready to wait and see before starting the season with a new signal-caller for the third straight year.

The same opportunities exist at running back. James Jackson and Najeh Davenport won't make Hurricane fans forget James, but life without him may not be so bad. BC and West Virginia may do things by committee until capable replacements emerge for Cloud and Zereoue, but that could stir some debate (which is always good), too.

"I'm sure they'll find somebody to play running back," Miami's Butch Davis says of WVU's search for Zereoue's successor. "It may not be Amos Zereoue, but they'll find somebody."

As will everybody else and isn't that what college football is all about, sticking new corner pieces into the puzzle. What fun would it be if we knew all the answers ahead of time, anyway? Let the games begin and the new stars emerge.

SCOTT HALLERMAN/ALLSPORT



KENNY KELLY

■ **TEAM ON THE RISE:** Rutgers. This may have been a more appropriate selection last year when Terry Shea's Scarlet Knights pulled off the second-biggest turnaround in Division I-A football and won five games. They may not win that many again this year, but the Scarlet Knights won't fall back to the ashes of 0-11, either. Rutgers has more talent, depth and experience than it has in a long time and won't be a team that can be taken lightly any more.

■ **TEAMS ON THE FALL:** West Virginia and Syracuse. The Mountaineers and Orangemen were picked to finish 1-2 in the conference last year and many of those reasons are now gone. WVU lost its entire offensive and defensive lines and will need to shore those areas up quickly. SU will have a brand new offensive backfield which means the freeze option offense probably won't be as proficient with Donovan McNabb, Rob Konrad and Kevin Johnson in the NFL. Expect both of those teams to fall from near the top to the middle of the pack this season.

■ **OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:** Marc Bulger, QB, West Virginia. When you look at last year's numbers-3,607 yards, 31 TD passes and five 300-plus passing days-it's hard to believe he wasn't considered for first-team all-conference then, but that's what happens when there's some guy named McNabb in the league. Bulger averaged almost 50 yards more yards of total offense (281) than anyone in the conference last season and the kid from Dan Marino's high school figures to be the man for the Mountaineers this season.

■ **DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:** Corey Moore, DE, Virginia Tech. A first-team All-America pick in his first season as a starter, Moore racked up 67 tackles, 13 sacks, 20 quarterback hurries and three blocked kicks in 1998 and there's no reason to think he won't continue to terrorize Tech opponents this fall. Now that everyone knows who he is, Moore may not approach last year's totals. But the Hokies have their entire front seven back, so opposing offenses won't be able to concentrate solely on him, either.

■ **MUST-SEE GAMES:** 1) Miami at Virginia Tech, Nov. 13. This year's version of the conference championship game. Both teams should be highly ranked and highly motivated. 2) Syracuse at Miami, Nov. 27. Don't think for one minute that last year's 66-13 debacle has been forgotten in Florida. Syracuse has won the last two in the series but this one will be played at Miami in 1, A.D. (After Donovan). 3) Notre Dame at Pittsburgh, Nov. 13. OK, it's only really a conference game in basketball, but it is the Panthers' last dance after 74 years in Pitt Stadium and that should mean something. The Panthers will try to have every living football letterman in attendance.

■ **MOST UNDERRATED PLAYER:** Carl Bradley, DT, Virginia Tech. He's the only member of the Hokies' front four who didn't receive all-league honors last season, but not because he wasn't worthy. The 6-2, 288-pound senior tied for fourth among Big East linemen by averaging 6.5 tackles per game. He also ranked fifth among Hokies with 71 stops and added 3 tackles for losses, 3½ sacks and six quarterback hurries while tying up blockers.

■ **NEXT STOP NFL:** 1) Hank Poteat, DB, Pittsburgh. The familiar catch phrase "best athlete available" may be applicable here. Poteat showed tremendous potential last year in his first full season on defense and is a special teams standout. Could he be the next Tebucky Jones? 2) Chris Hovan, DT, Boston College. Pro scouts love big, strong defensive linemen and Hovan has all the tools, including a tremendous work ethic. 3) Bulger. Next year's draft isn't considered particularly strong at the quarterback position and Bulger has good arm strength, accuracy and a quick release. He also

has the big build the pros like and should get a shot somewhere.

■ **JOHNNY ON THE SPOT:** Madei Williams, QB Syracuse. The Orange offense is tough enough to master without having to do it in the shadow of McNabb, a three-time conference player of the year and the second player chosen in the NFL draft. Williams does have one thing on his side the other candidates for the job don't: experience. He's played in seven games and thrown seven passes in his college career.

■ **RECRUITING WINNERS AND LOSERS:** Miami (Fla.), the undisputed 1999 Big East recruiting champ, and Temple, the 1999 Big East recruiting chump, do have something in common as they both landed the sons of former NFL stars. The Hurricanes signed a top-10 class nationally that includes Jarrett Payton, the son of Sweetness. Temple got 16 of the 80 players it targeted, including Joe Klecko's son Dan, but has a long way to go. Boston College and Syracuse had good years. Boston College's top recruit was highly-regarded running back William Green, while Syracuse landed a top-notch freshman runner of its own, Tony Milton. Pitt secured its quarterback of the future in 6-3, 200-pound frosh Rod Rutherford.

■ **ODDS AND ENDS:** Two head coaches in the conference, Virginia Tech's Frank Beamer and Rutgers' Terry Shea, have the added bonus of coaching their sons. Shane Beamer is a long snapper for the Hokies and Garrett Shea starts in the secondary for the Scarlet Knights. "To share what we've been able to share has been special," Coach Beamer says. "We've probably had five more years together than most fathers and sons do..." Other family ties include Pittsburgh's Jay Junko, whose father Bob is the Panthers' defensive coordinator and Syracuse's Jeff Lowe, whose father Don is the school's director of sports medicine. Pittsburgh receiver Lamar Slade is the brother of New England linebacker Chris Slade and Miami safety Al Blades is the sibling of former Hurricane stars Brian and Bennie Blades... Tech kicker Shayne Graham enters the season with 264 points, nine points shy of the Big East record... Miami has agreed to resume its series with Florida in 2002 and 2003.

HANK POTEAT



RICK STEWART/ALLSPORT

Big Ten

CONFERENCE

BY MICHAEL BRADLEY

PROJECTED FINISH

	CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1. Penn State	8-0	11-1
2. Michigan	7-1	10-1
3. Wisconsin	6-2	9-2
4. Ohio State	6-2	9-3
5. Purdue	4-4	7-4
6. Michigan State	4-4	6-5
7. Minnesota	3-5	6-5
8. Indiana	3-5	5-6
9. Iowa	2-6	4-7
10. Northwestern	1-7	3-8
11. Illinois	0-8	2-9

LaVAR ARRINGTON



JONATHAN DANIEL/ALLSPORT

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Drew Brees ^(a)	Purdue	6-1	212	Jr.
RB	Ron Dayne	Wisconsin	5-10	253	Sr.
RB	Anthony Thomas	Michigan	6-2	221	Jr.
WR	Randall Lane	Purdue	6-1	205	Sr.
WR	Plaxico Burress	Michigan State	6-6	229	Jr.
TE	Jay Tant	Northwestern	6-3	254	Sr.
T	Chris McIntosh	Wisconsin	6-7	307	Sr.
G	Steve Hutchinson	Michigan	6-5	296	Jr.
C	Casey Rabach	Wisconsin	6-5	287	Sr.
G	Rob Murphy	Ohio State	6-5	300	Sr.
T	Jeff Backus	Michigan	6-6	288	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DL	Courtney Brown	Penn State	6-5	265	Sr.
DL	Brent Johnson	Ohio State	6-4	265	Jr.
DL	James Hall	Michigan	6-3	257	Sr.
DL	Adewale Ogunleye	Indiana	6-5	260	Sr.
LB	Na'il Diggs	Ohio State	6-4	235	Sr.
LB	Brandon Short	Penn State	6-3	246	Sr.
LB	LaVar Arrington ^(d)	Penn State	6-3	233	Jr.
CB	David Macklin	Penn State	5-9	192	Sr.
CB	Ahmed Plummer	Ohio State	6-0	190	Sr.
S	Tommy Hendricks	Michigan	6-2	215	Sr.
S	Tyrone Carter	Minnesota	5-9	184	Sr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Paul Edinger	Michigan State	5-10	168	Sr.
P	Kevin Stemke	Wisconsin	6-2	186	Jr.
KR	Kahlil Hill	Iowa	6-3	185	So.

^(a) Offensive Player of the Year ^(d) Defensive Player of the Year

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: University Park, PA
ENROLLMENT: 34,887
STADIUM: Beaver Stadium (93,967)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 9-3
COACH: Joe Paterno
CAREER: 307-80-3; **HERE:** 307-80-3
BOWL: Won Outback (26-14 over Kentucky)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 44

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Kevin Thompson*	6-5	219	Sr.
FB	Mike Cerimele*	5-10	233	Jr.
TB	Eric McCoo*	5-10	195	So.
SE	Corey Jones	5-10	168	Sr.
FL	Chafie Fields*	6-1	197	Sr.
TE	Tony Stewart	6-5	256	Jr.
RT	Jordan Caruso	6-4	302	Jr.
RG	Kareem McKenzie*	6-7	313	Jr.
C	Eric Cole*	6-5	302	Sr.
LG	Greg Ransom*	6-2	291	Jr.
LT	John Blick*	6-6	314	Sr.
K	Travis Forney*	5-9	161	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Courtney Brown*	6-5	265	Sr.
DT	David Fleischhauer*	6-3	274	Sr.
NT	Bob Jones*	6-5	271	So.
DE	Justin Kurpekis	6-4	247	Jr.
LB	LaVar Arrington*	6-3	233	Jr.
LB	Brandon Short*	6-3	246	Sr.
LB	Mac Morrison*	6-1	240	Sr.
CB	David Macklin*	5-9	192	Sr.
CB	Anthony King*	5-8	173	Jr.
SS	Derek Fox*	5-11	200	Sr.
FS	James Boyd	6-0	208	Jr.
P	Pat Pidgeon*	5-10	198	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Eric McCoo	822	6.5	3
Cordell Mitchell	511	5.2	2
Mike Cerimele	261	5.0	8

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Kevin Thompson	1,691	53.5	6	8

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Corey Jones	27	368	13.6	2
Chafie Fields	25	369	14.8	1
Mike Cerimele	14	102	7.3	0

KICKING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Travis Forney, 20 of 29 FG (50 long), 29 of 30 PAT				

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Brandon Short	67	15 for loss
LaVar Arrington	65	17 for loss
Courtney Brown	47	11.5 sacks
Mac Morrison	47	4.5 sacks
James Boyd	42	3 forced fumbles

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 28	Arizona (Pigskin Classic)	—
Sept. 4	Akron	—
Sept. 11	Pittsburgh	W, 20-13
Sept. 18	at Miami (Fla.)	—
Sept. 25	Indiana	—
Oct. 9	at Iowa	—
Oct. 16	Ohio State	L, 9-28
Oct. 23	at Purdue	W, 31-13
Oct. 30	at Illinois	W, 27-0
Nov. 6	Minnesota	W, 27-17
Nov. 13	Michigan	L, 0-27
Nov. 20	at Michigan State	W, 51-28

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total Offense	363.2 ypg	6th
Total Defense	306.8 ypg	4th
Scoring Offense	26.4 ppg	6th
Scoring Defense	15.3 ppg	3rd

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

PENN STATE

NITTANY LIONS

Last year, Joe Paterno earned his 300th win amidst tremendous celebration and nostalgic outpouring. This season, things could be even more exciting. The Nittany Lions have to be considered one of the true national title contenders in the country. If only...

If only quarterback Kevin Thompson gets his act together. If only the Lions can find a way to break the spell Michigan and Ohio State have cast over them the past two years (PSU is 1-3 against them). If only some other Big Ten foe (Michigan State, Wisconsin) doesn't lay a humbling beating on PSU late in the year.

Penn State might just have the nation's top defense this year. And with eight starters returning on the other side, the Lions should be able to score plenty of points. There are some potential stars on the roster. Paterno remains one of the game's top coaches. But it all comes down to quarterback. If Thompson can prove he is the man who looked confident and sharp (even if his receivers didn't) in the Outback Bowl game against Kentucky, Penn State is in business. If not, any one of five opponents could lay the Lions low and spoil Paterno's chance for a big ending—even if he will surpass Bear Bryant's career win total during the 2000 season.

The challenge is there. It may be unfair to put this all on Thompson, but national title teams need strong leadership and big production at quarterback. Thompson has the physical tools. Now, he needs to put it all together. There's nothing really at stake, just a chance at a championship.

Offense Thompson completed just 53.5% of his passes last year, threw just six touchdowns and was picked off eight times. There were games when he looked flustered and out of rhythm. Other times, he could be sharp. If Thompson is consistently good, Penn State has a chance to beat anybody. Though PSU fans would love to see Rashard Casey (13 of 18, 235 yards, 3 TDs in the spring game) get a full chance, thanks to the junior's big skill level and big-play potential, he looked even less comfortable last year. The job is Thompson's to lose.

At least Thompson won't have to worry about the ground game. Soph Eric McCoo emerged last year as a major ballcarrying threat and could get about 1,200 yards this season, if he gets the carries. That might not happen since senior Cordell Mitchell and soph Omar Easy both have potential. So does fullback Aaron Harris, whose knee didn't allow for top production last year. It could this year, making him and junior Mike Cerimele a strong tandem at that spot.

The widest picture is a little tough to read. Seniors Chafie Fields and Corey Jones combined to catch 52 balls last year. Will they do more if Thompson improves, or are their limitations hampering the QB somewhat? Each has 50-catch potential and the ability to make some big plays. It's time to do that now.

The only loss from the offensive line is tackle Floyd Wedderburn (a fifth-round draft pick of the Seattle Seahawks), who should be replaced by junior Jordan Caruso, who started three games last year. Senior Eric Cole made a smooth transition to center (from guard) last year and is an honors candidate, while junior Kareem McKenzie could become an all-star at guard.

Defense When Brandon Short announced he was returning to man the middle linebacker spot for the 1999 season, PSU fans were right to rejoice. Short is a prolific tackler, big-play man and natural leader. Together with junior LaVar Arrington, a full-fledged OLB prodigy, they give Penn State the nation's best linebacking tandem. The third member of the group, senior Mac Morrison, is no slouch, either.

The defensive line must replace end Brad Scioli (probably with junior Justin Kurpekis), but Courtney Brown, a

senior terror on the other side returns. Brown had 23 tackles for loss and 11.5 sacks last year. Few linemen can handle him one-on-one. Senior David Fleischhauer handles one tackle spot, but look out for soph Bob Jones, who could become a standout on the nose.

Only free safety Shawn Lee is gone from the secondary, but look out for soph James Boyd, who was a highly-touted recruit last year and showed his talent by making 42 tackles as a reserve last year. He'll help solidify an excellent secondary that is led by senior corner David Macklin, whose six interceptions tied him for the Big Ten lead in that category last year. Senior Anthony King is a talent at the other corner, while senior strong safety (or "Hero" in the PSU parlance) Derek Fox should improve after an impressive debut.

Special Teams Everybody of consequence is back in this area. Senior punter Pat Pidgeon averaged 42.6 yards per boot, the fifth-best ever at Penn State. He dropped 17 of his 59 punts inside the opposing 20-yard line. Kicker Travis Forney, another senior, had an up-and-down '98, making five kicks against Michigan State and four versus Kentucky, but going 11-for-20 in his other kicks. Junior Bruce Branch is a dangerous punt return man, while Eddie Drummond and Kenny Watson are solid bringing back kicks.

New One to Know It might be hard to make a name for oneself on a defense that returns nine starters, but James Boyd has the talent to do just that. He'll step into the free safety position this year and should improve on what was a pretty impressive sophomore season. Not only did Boyd make 42 tackles in a reserve role, he also tied for second in the Big Ten with three forced fumbles. Boyd has great size (6-0, 208) and plenty of speed, a combination that should stand out no matter what company he keeps.

Schedule We'll learn plenty about the Lions right away. They host Arizona in the Pigskin Classic Aug. 28 and visit Miami (Fla.) on Sept. 18. Win those, and the pollsters (and computers) will take notice. The Lions don't play Wisconsin this year, grabbing Iowa instead. That's a good trade. And though PSU must visit Purdue, it gets both Ohio State (Oct. 6) and Michigan (Nov. 13) at home.



COURTNEY BROWN

PHOTO: RICK STEWART/ALLSPORT

PROJECTED RECORD: 11-1

MICHIGAN

WOLVERINES

By the time the hangover from the 1997 national championship season wore off sometime last September, Michigan was 0-2 and doing its best to show exactly how not to defend a title. The Wolverines had played smugly in losses to Notre Dame and Syracuse, figuring foes would be scared of their once-vaunted defense and capitulate by the coin flip. When that didn't happen, it was time for soul-searching to recapture the drive that had characterized the previous season's dizzying climb to the top.

Some might think last year's three-loss season was merely a return to the old days, that the championship campaign was an aberration and that Michigan was doomed to lose three or four every year, thanks to its institutional arrogance and determination to preserve the status quo. We disagree. For now, last year's slow start was practically inevitable, what with all the leadership that had been drained from the '97 team. You don't lose a practically infallible quarterback, the Heisman Trophy winner and other assorted standouts without some kind of adjustment.

So, what do we have for '99? Things appear eerily similar to the national title season. A fifth-year senior returns under center, no doubt hardened by the difficulties of a first season as a starter. A tough front wall, anchored by relentless veterans, leads what should be an excellent defense.

There is a productive back ready to run the ball. And so on. Michigan has the talent and experience to contend for everything this year.

Offense Michigan came out of spring drills with no decision on its quarterback situation. No surprise there. Carr can't afford to anger talented sophomore Drew Henson with bad news, not with the Yankees beckoning. Henson took \$2 million in bonus money from George Steinbrenner and could always turn to the diamond full-time. That would be a mistake, since at worst, he'll see some time this year and take over the starting reins in 2000. Henson has big talent but is inexperienced, and that's not good at Michigan. It's also why the Wolverines will probably turn to Tom Brady, who showed some signs of improvement last year but still threw too many interceptions (12). He'll probably get the start, but it won't take too much for Henson to take over.

Carr would like to see his quarterback's role reduced some. Michigan threw the ball 350 times last year, not exactly the classic, U-M formula. A lot of that was due to a ground attack that sputtered at times and managed just 3.8 yards per carry. Things may improve this year, particularly if junior horse Anthony Thomas can prove he's ready to handle 20-25 carries a game. He split time with senior Clarence Williams last year, but still gained 891 yards and scored 15 times. He has it all—power, speed, moves—and could become a premier performer. He'll have to, because the leg injury Justin Fargas suffered against Northwestern last year hasn't healed, and Williams is gone.

That leaves the tailback position in precarious shape. Soph Walter Cross, who flashed some talent last year, will get a chance to perform, as will incoming freshmen Charles Drake and Brent Cummings.

The receiver situation looks good, although Tai Streets' consistent production will be missed. Seniors DiAllo Johnson, Marcus Knight and Kevin Bryant return to form a strong nucleus, but the real excitement could come from sophs David Terrell and Marquise Walker, as well as newcomers Ronald Bellamy and Tyrece Butler. Tight end could be a problem, since Carr is reluctant to move Aaron Shea back there from fullback. If a winner can be found from among four youngsters, Shea will stay in the backfield.

Up front, stalwarts Steve Hutchinson (guard), Jeff Backus (tackle), David Brandt (center) and Chris Ziemann (guard) return, with Jason Brooks and Maurice Williams competing for the vacant spot, although Brooks' status was questionable, due to an offseason suspension. It should be a good line.

Defense By the middle of last season, the Wolverines looked like their championship counterparts, stuffing rivals by preventing any ground success and forcing plenty of turnovers. But that success was something of a sham, since it was accomplished largely against the league's soft underbelly. Against Ohio State and Arkansas (in the Citrus Bowl), the Wolves allowed a combined 62 points and hardly dominated.

Success this year must start up front, where tackle Rob Renes and end James Hall have the chance to be dominant. Expect senior Josh Williams to handle the other tackle spot, with Jake Frysinger the leading candidate at the other end spot, although redshirt freshman Dave Armstrong could step in there. Depth could be a problem.

A pair of standouts lead the linebacking corps. Dhani Jones is a predator on the outside, while Ian Gold emerged last year as a full-time terror. He could move back inside to replace last year's leading tackler, Sam Sword. That would create a void on the outside that could be filled by sophomores Eric Rosel, Anthony Jordan, who made 41 tackles last year, or Eric Brackins.

The secondary is in fine shape, with senior strong safety Tommy Hendricks a big-time all-star candidate. He'll be joined on the last line of defense by 1998 starter DeWayne Patmon. The corner situation, however, received a blow during the offseason when Carr booted starter William Peterson from the team for a rules violation. Junior James Whitley is a fixture on one side, while Todd Howard will fit in on the other side, although incoming freshman Jeremy LaSeur (and others) will almost certainly get a look.

Special Teams The Wolverines lost both specialists from last season, although that isn't such a bad thing. Kicker Jay Feely made just 9-of-14 from 30 and beyond, while punter Jason Vinson averaged just 39.2 yards on 56 punts. Soph Hayden Epstein, a touted recruit from a year ago, will take a shot at both jobs, although junior Cory Sargent appeared to have the job coming out of spring drills. The return situation is in pretty good shape. Thomas averaged 25.3 yards per kick return last year and has the speed to take it all the way, while Knight and Whitley are solid bringing back punts.

New One to Know Carr said he liked the decisiveness of new cornerback Jeremy LaSeur, who resisted the pressure exerted by schools much closer to his Holly Springs, MS, home to play for the Wolverines. Since it's likely the speedy, 6-1, 177-pounder will see some immediate action at cornerback, a thin spot on the Wolverine roster this year. LaSeur is a highly-regarded cover man who will get a chance at nickel and dime work, as well as special teams assignments.

Schedule Michigan has one of the nation's toughest schedules. Yes, the year does open with games against Notre Dame (home) and Syracuse (road), but the Orangemen will not be as good as last year. The Big Ten slate is certainly challenging, thanks in part to the return of Purdue. Two stretches of league play stand out. The first comes early, against Wisconsin, the Boilermakers and Michigan State. The season ends with a trip to Penn State, followed by the visit from the Buckeyes.

PROJECTED RECORD: 10-1

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: Ann Arbor, MI
ENROLLMENT: 49,542
STADIUM: Michigan Stadium (107,501)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 10-3
COACH: Lloyd Carr
CAREER: 39-11; **HERE:** 39-11
BOWL: Won Citrus (45-31 over Arkansas)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 44

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Tom Brady*	6-5	213	Sr.
FB	Aaron Shea*	6-5	251	Sr.
TB	Anthony Thomas*	6-2	221	Jr.
WR	DiAllo Johnson	6-3	193	Sr.
WR	Marcus Knight*	6-1	181	Sr.
TE	Shawn Thompson	6-4	243	So.
LT	Jeff Backus*	6-6	288	Jr.
LG	Steve Hutchinson*	6-5	296	Jr.
C	David Brandt*	6-4	293	Jr.
RG	Chris Ziemann*	6-7	288	Sr.
RT	Maurice Williams	6-5	283	Jr.
K	Hayden Epstein	6-2	194	So.

DEFENSE				
POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
RLB	James Hall*	6-3	257	Sr.
NG	Rob Renes*	6-1	288	Sr.
DT	Josh Williams*	6-3	279	Sr.
DE	Jake Frysinger	6-4	272	Jr.
ILB	Dhani Jones*	6-2	225	Sr.
ILB	Ian Gold*	6-1	213	Sr.
OLB	Eric Rosel	6-3	225	So.
CB	James Whitley*	5-11	190	Jr.
CB	Todd Howard	5-10	178	So.
SS	Tommy Hendricks*	6-2	215	Sr.
FS	DeWayne Patmon*	6-0	181	Jr.
P	Cory Sargent	6-3	187	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Anthony Thomas		891	5.4	15	
Walter Cross		145	4.1	2	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Tom Brady		2,636	61.1	15	12
Drew Henson		254	44.7	3	1
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Marcus Knight		42	603	14.4	1
Aaron Shea		16	154	9.6	1
Anthony Thomas		16	152	9.5	0
David Terrell		14	149	10.6	2

KICKING		
None		
DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Tommy Hendricks	79	4 for loss
Dhani Jones	72	11 for loss
Ian Gold	68	8 for loss
James Hall	63	11 sacks
James Whitley	53	3 INT
Rob Renes	51	9 for loss

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Notre Dame	L, 20-36
Sept. 11	Rice	—
Sept. 18	at Syracuse	L, 28-38
Sept. 25	at Wisconsin	W, 27-10
Oct. 2	Purdue	—
Oct. 9	at Michigan State	W, 29-17
Oct. 23	Illinois	—
Oct. 30	at Indiana	W, 21-10
Nov. 6	Northwestern	W, 12-6
Nov. 13	at Penn State	W, 27-0
Nov. 20	Ohio State	L, 16-31

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

TOTAL RANK		
Total Offense	380.8 ypg	3rd
Total Defense	303.0 ypg	3rd
Scoring Offense	27.6 ppg	5th
Scoring Defense	18.1 ppg	4th

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: Madison, WI
ENROLLMENT: 40,109
STADIUM: Camp Randall Stadium (76,129)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 11-1
COACH: Barry Alvarez
CAREER: 60-42-4; **HERE:** 60-42-4
BOWL: Won Rose (38-31 over UCLA)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 50

WISCONSIN

BADGERS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Scott Kavanagh	6-4	214	Sr.
FB	Chad Kuhns	6-1	242	So.
TB	Ron Dayne*	5-10	253	Sr.
FL	Ahmad Merritt*	5-10	194	Sr.
SE	Chris Chambers*	6-1	203	Jr.
TE	Dague Retzlaff	6-8	280	Jr.
LT	Chris McIntosh*	6-7	307	Sr.
LG	Bill Ferrario*	6-3	299	Jr.
C	Casey Rabach*	6-5	287	Jr.
RG	Dave Costa*	6-5	293	Jr.
RT	Brian Lamont	6-8	316	So.
K	Vitaly Pisetsky	5-10	224	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	John Favret*	6-4	231	Jr.
DT	Wendell Bryant	6-4	298	So.
DT	Eric Mahlik*	6-3	263	Jr.
DE	Ross Kolodziej*	6-3	284	Jr.
LB	Chris Ghidorzi*	6-3	237	Sr.
LB	Donnel Thompson*	6-0	235	Sr.
LB	Dan Lisowski	6-1	220	So.
CB	Mike Echols*	5-10	173	So.
CB	Jamar Fletcher*	5-10	167	So.
FS	Jason Doering*	6-0	201	Jr.
SS	Bobby Myers	6-2	183	Sr.
P	Kevin Stemke*	5-10	167	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Ron Dayne		1,568	5.2	15	
Eddie Faulkner		173	2.9	2	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Scott Kavanagh		188	53.6	4	1
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Chris Chambers		28	563	20.1	7
Nick Davis		10	127	12.7	0
KICKING					
None					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Donnel Thompson		109	8 for loss		
Chris Ghidorzi		104	8 for loss		
Jason Doering		94	3 INTs		
John Favret		67	8 sacks		
Mike Echols		46	3 INTs		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Murray State	—
Sept. 11	Ball State	—
Sept. 18	at Cincinnati	—
Sept. 25	Michigan	L, 10-27
Oct. 2	at Ohio State	—
Oct. 9	at Minnesota	W, 26-7
Oct. 16	Indiana	W, 24-20
Oct. 23	Michigan State	—
Oct. 30	at Northwestern	W, 38-7
Nov. 6	at Purdue	W, 31-24
Nov. 13	Iowa	W, 31-0

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total Offense	329.5 ypg	7th
Total Defense	292.6 ypg	2nd
Scoring Offense	31.8 ppg	3rd
Scoring Defense	11.9 ppg	1st

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

By the time the Badgers had struck a blow for the Big Ten by trampling what looked like a cowardly UCLA defense in the Rose Bowl, all that talk about soft schedules, arcane tiebreaking systems and one-dimensional offenses had disappeared. Wisconsin capped a remarkable '98 campaign by winning the Only Game That Matters in the conference and once again showing the nation that Barry Alvarez sure knows what he's doing.

That makes two Rose Bowl wins in six years for Alvarez, something nobody else in the Big Ten can say. In fact, it's been a long time since any Big Ten coach can make that claim. While we spend most of our time crooning about Michigan, Penn State and Ohio State, the Badgers have been taking care of business.

History tells us, however, not to expect an encore. Wisconsin usually loads up for a big run every four or five years before taking something of a step back. That's what will happen this year in Madison. While the post-season still beckons, the Badgers lack experience under center and will now face a schedule that doesn't afford them eight weeks to gather momentum and for the first time in years—features the Wolverines and Buckeyes.

But Wisconsin will still be dangerous. And boring. Expect another season of great defense and Ron Dayne in Madison, with as little passing as possible. Wisconsin led the nation in all four major defensive statistical categories last year and was tops in the country in fewest points allowed. Although Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year Tom Burke and his league-record 22 sacks are gone, eight of his '98 mates are back.

As for Dayne, he can count on about 350 carries this year, provided he stays healthy. Last season, the second one in a row, Dayne was hobbled by injuries. Should he stay healthy, he has a chance to break Ricky Williams' career rushing record. You know Alvarez would like to see that happen, since a big year for Dayne means plenty of ball-control Wisconsin football. And plenty of wins. Badger fans shouldn't bet on a return trip to Pasadena, but they can certainly make plans for a postseason trip to some warm-weather destination. Wisconsin will be good, but don't expect a dynasty to start in Madison.

Offense Anybody who watched Dayne smash through the arm-tackling UCLA softies for 246 yards and four scores knows that he is a rare breed. His blend of size (5-10, 253) and speed is so rare that we may not see the likes of him again. You can bet the Badgers aren't counting on it. Dayne has been the centerpiece of the team since arriving in Madison and is perfectly suited for Alvarez's land-assault approach. Should Dayne stay healthy, he should be able to pile up the 1,717 yards necessary to break Williams' record. That should also be good for a third straight Big Ten rushing title, something no one has ever done, and a good look from Heisman voters.

Under normal circumstances, Dayne would get plenty of work—too much, perhaps. But, with four-year starting quarterback Mike Samuel departed, Alvarez could get even more conservative than usual. Senior Scott Kavanagh proved himself to be a steady backup last year, but he is hardly a star. Nor will he have the chance to prove himself as one. Alvarez favors about 15-20 passes a game, and he wouldn't throw any if he didn't have to. Expect him to favor Kavanagh's experience over redshirt freshman Brooks Bollinger's skills. That means another year of about 53% completion success and lots of handing off.

That won't make the wideouts too happy, particularly Chris Chambers, who scored seven times on only 28 receptions last year and has big-play ability. He might catch 70 on a team with a sophisticated passing attack. Figure him for about 40 this year. That's not bad. Senior

Ahmad Merritt and soph Nick Davis are steady receivers, but neither is all that dangerous.

The Badgers may have bid farewell to gigantic tackle Aaron Gibson, but the line remains a strength, as always. Alvarez always seems to find talented people for his front five. This year's standout is senior tackle Chris McIntosh, who handles the left side and should be one of the nation's best. Junior center Casey Rabach was named second-team all-league last year and has star potential, while guards Dave Costa and Bill Ferrario are steady. Soph Brian Lamont and redshirt frosh Ben Johnson will fight it out for Gibson's vacated right tackle spot.

Defense Even without Burke, the Badgers are strong here. Chris Ghidorzi and Donnel Thompson, the two leading tacklers from '98, lead the linebacker corps. Each had eight tackles for loss, and Ghidorzi had two interceptions. Roger Knight, a '98 starter who missed last year with a broken arm, will battle Dan Lisowski for the other linebacker spot.

Up front, junior John Favret appears to be the big-play candidate for this season. Although he won't equal Burke's amazing 33 stops behind the line, Favret had 12 of his own in '98 and has distinguished himself as quick to the ball during his two seasons. Junior Ross Kolodziej moves into Burke's spot after starting 20 games at tackle during his two years in Madison.

Though Favret has plenty of potential, look out for soph Wendell Bryant, who had two sacks in the Rose Bowl and is a future star. Junior Eric Mahlik should be steady, though somewhat undersized at 263 pounds, at the other tackle spot.

How about that freshman season for Jamar Fletcher? All he did last year was pick off seven passes and return three for touchdowns. Try topping that. He is a fixture at one corner, while speedy classmate Mike Echols (three picks) holds down the other side. If the Badgers can find a strong safety (nickel man Bobby Myers gets the first look) to complement hard-hitting free man Jason Doering, this unit could be among the best in the nation.

Special Teams Even though Matt Davenport, who made 19 of 21 field goal tries last year, is gone, this area is a strength. Junior punter Kevin Stemke (43.8 average) is one of the nation's best and is improving his ability to drop balls inside opposing 20-yard lines. Expect senior Vitaly Pisetsky, who handled kickoffs last year, to move into the placement job. Nick Davis is a dangerous punt returner, who brought back two for touchdowns last year and averaged a solid 22.5 yards bringing back kicks. And the Badger punt-blocking unit, which swatted four last year, should be productive again in '99.

New One to Know Fullback isn't a glamour position at Wisconsin, particularly since Dayne goes about 253 and is usually bigger than the men in front of him. But soph Chad Kuhns weighs in at 242 and should be able clear some space for Dayne—as if the Big Guy needs it. Kuhns is also a solid receiver who caught five balls and scored once last year.

Schedule Well, things start off as usual in Madison. The Badgers play Murray State, Ball State and Cincinnati in the nonconference portion. That shapes up this way: Blowout, blowout, rout. Then comes the trouble. Instead of feasting on the softer part of the Big Ten schedule, the Badgers encounter Michigan and Ohio State in back-to-back weekends. So much for those 8-0 starts. The rest of the schedule is pretty manageable, with only a Nov. 6 trip to Purdue especially dangerous.

PROJECTED RECORD: 9-2

OHIO STATE

BUCKEYES

At the end of last season, Ohio State coach John Cooper was arguing that his Buckeyes were completely deserving of a spot in the BCS title game, no matter what the convoluted formula that determined the game's participants said. He was probably right. Even though Tennessee was crowned the '98 national champ, a strong argument could be made that the Buckeyes were the nation's best.

OSU had overwhelming talent and experience on both sides of the ball. They could score. They could stop others from doing the same. They had been ranked number one for 10 straight weeks. They had beaten Michigan. They were explosive. They were deep.

They had lost to Michigan State.

Cooper's argument had a sound theoretical basis, but in practice, it came up short. Not only had the Buckeyes blown a game which they had commanded—at home, no less—but they committed the cardinal sin of losing late in the season, when there is little time for the polls to forgive a team. Unlike Florida State, which coughed one up in September, Ohio State tripped in November, and that was that.

Even though a Cooper-coached OSU team beat Michigan and won a New Year's Day bowl for the first time, there is still some grumbling around Columbus that Coop isn't the man for the job. Some fans forget about his four straight 10-win seasons and point to his trouble with Michigan and propensity for other stumbles along the way. Knock it off. The guy has done a great job, and he deserves some credit.

This year, he deserves some patience, too. Although the Buckeyes return plenty of talent, they will be without several key performers who have made the last couple seasons so special. Quarterback Joe Germaine, wideout David Boston, cornerback Antoine Winfield, safety Damon Moore and linebacker Andy Katzenmoyer are all gone—and were all drafted—leaving the Buckeyes with some holes to fill. It would be naive to consider the replacements in over their heads, since OSU has piled great recruiting classes on top of each other lately. But none has the experience of his predecessor. And with a schedule looming that includes games with Miami and UCLA in the first two weeks and also returns of Wisconsin and Purdue on the conference slate, the Buckeyes will need some time to get rolling.

Don't expect a conference title this year, since the quarterback situation is shaky, and the defense lacks the abundance of playmakers that made it so potent last year. But don't look for a big slide, either. The Buckeyes play 12 games plus a bowl in 1999, and the streak of double-digit victory campaigns should be intact. By the time 2000 rolls around, Ohio State should be back in the thick of the national championship hunt. That's not so bad. Of course, the Buckeyes' fans will find a way to make it sound awful.

Offense The Big News here comes under center, where sophs Steve Bellisari and Austin Moherman staged a spirited battle for the quarterback position during the spring. Bellisari is a gritty tough guy who loves to make big plays and actually played on the OSU special teams last year, while Moherman is the classic pocket passer with a more advanced grasp of the Buckeye offense. It comes down to what Cooper wants. Does he want a riverboat gambler, the kind of guy who can galvanize his teammates or a technician with all the tools and less of a propensity for making mistakes? The bet here is Bellisari, who might cause Cooper some stomach troubles with his risk-taking but whose upside is huge.

He'll have the luxury of working behind one of the nation's top offensive lines. Four starters return from last year's unit, which paved the way for a 4.7-yard rushing average. Leading the way is all-America guard Rob Murphy, although right guard Ben Gilbert and left tackle Tyson Walter aren't shabby, either. The group does, how-

ever, have to improve its pass protection. Buckeye quarterbacks were sacked 34 times last year.

The skill situation is in good shape, thanks primarily to the return of tailback Michael Wiley, who rushed for 1,235 yards and 10 scores last year. Depth is a problem there, but Wiley proved last year that he could be a front-line back. He gets the chance at 25 carries a game this year. Although Boston and Dee Miller have graduated, the wideout situation is in good shape. Junior Ken-Yon Rambo, a speedster, and Reggie Germany have tremendous potential. Massive Steve Wisniewski (6-5, 265) is a solid target at tight end and a good blocker.

Defense The whole gang is back up front. Cooper wanted to build more depth along the defensive line last year, and he succeeded. The result is a two-deep with plenty of experience and playmaking ability. Ends Brent Johnson and Rodney Bailey combined for 17 sacks and have speed and strength. In reserve is speedy James Cotton, who made a big splash last year after arriving from junior college. Soph tackle Ryan Pickett has tremendous potential, while Joe Brown is quick and capable of disrupting enemy backfield plans.

The Big Kat is gone from the linebacking corps, but Na'il Diggs isn't. Buckeye fans know that Diggs was the main man in the threesome last year, and stardom awaits in '99. Diggs is lightning-quick and can get into the backfield as well as any other linebacker in the nation. He'll receive plenty of attention, however, since his two fellow starters are somewhat green. Senior Chris Kirk is a senior, but he has backed up Katzenmoyer the past three years, while soph Courtland Bullard has all the tools but played in only two games last season, due to a groin injury. If he stumbles, soph Tim Cheatwood has the tools to step in.

The secondary is a half-full, half-empty proposition. Free safety Gary Berry is a great athlete who makes all the plays, while corner Ahmed Plummer had four interceptions last year. But the key to the secondary is how well soph Nate Clements fills in for Winfield at the other corner, and if senior Percy King can move from valued reserve to starter in place of Moore. They have potential, if not tremendous resumes.

Special Teams Although kicker Dan Stultz missed spring drills because of back surgery, he is expected to return for the fall. Buckeyes fans hope the medical procedure improves Stultz's accuracy, because he was a shaky 13-of-25 on placement attempts last year. He has a good leg, but his marksmanship needs a boost. With Brent Bartholomew gone, the punting job (and some placekicking duties, should Stultz continue to falter) could fall to freshman B.J. Sander. The return situation is in good hands. Look for Rambo to handle punt work and help Wiley bringing back kicks. Both have breakaway speed.

New One to Know Watch Steve Bellisari play quarterback, and it's easy to understand that his brother, Greg, played linebacker for the Buckeyes. Bellisari has charisma, toughness and a knack for making plays. Although Moherman has an extra year's experience, Bellisari has the potential to be a special player who delivers in the big moments. That could be just what the Buckeyes need.

Schedule You won't find an odder slate anywhere. After opening with Miami (Fla.) Aug. 29, the Buckeyes play five straight home games, with UCLA, Wisconsin and Purdue the highest-profile guests. Things get sticky after that. OSU closes with four of its last six on the road, including visits to Penn State and Michigan.

PROJECTED RECORD: 9-3

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: Columbus, OH
ENROLLMENT: 49,542
STADIUM: Ohio Stadium (88,841)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 11-1
COACH: John Cooper
CAREER: 179-73-6; **HERE:** 97-33-4
BOWL: Won Sugar (24-14 over Texas A&M)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 42

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE			
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT
QB	Steve Bellisari	6-3	210
FB	Matt Keller*	6-0	238
TB	Michael Wiley*	6-0	195
SE	Reggie Germany	6-2	195
FL	Ken-Yon Rambo	6-1	190
TE	Steve Wisniewski	6-5	265
LT	Tyson Walter*	6-5	305
LG	Rob Murphy*	6-5	300
C	Kurt Murphy*	6-4	290
RG	Ben Gilbert*	6-5	295
RT	Henry Fleming	6-7	305
K	Dan Stultz*	6-0	195

DEFENSE			
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT
DE	Rodney Bailey*	6-3	255
DT	Ryan Pickett*	6-3	290
DT	Joe Brown*	6-6	285
DE	Brent Johnson*	6-4	265
LB	Na'il Diggs*	6-4	235
LB	Chris Kirk	6-3	235
LB	Courtland Bullard	6-3	220
CB	Nate Clements	6-0	185
CB	Ahmed Plummer*	6-0	190
SS	Percy King	6-4	210
FS	Gary Berry*	6-0	195
P	B.J. Sander	6-3	195

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Michael Wiley		1,235	6.2	10
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD
Steve Bellisari		24	60.0	0
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG
Michael Wiley		27	200	7.4
Matt Keller		16	200	12.5
Reggie Germany		14	229	16.4

KICKING
 Dan Stultz, 13 of 25 FG (46 long), 53 of 54 PAT

DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC
Na'il Diggs		80	16 for loss
Gary Berry		55	4 for loss
Ahmed Plummer		52	4 INTs
Brent Johnson		40	7 sacks

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 29	Miami (Fla.)*	—
Sept. 11	UCLA	—
Sept. 18	Ohio	—
Sept. 25	Cincinnati	—
Oct. 2	Wisconsin	—
Oct. 9	Purdue	—
Oct. 16	at Penn State	W, 28-9
Oct. 23	at Minnesota	W, 45-15
Oct. 30	Iowa	W, 45-14
Nov. 6	at Michigan State	W, 24-28
Nov. 13	Illinois	W, 41-0
Nov. 20	at Michigan	W, 31-16

*Kickoff Classic at Meadowlands

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total Offense	497.6 ypg	1st
Total Defense	259.8 ypg	1st
Scoring Offense	35.8 ppg	1st
Scoring Defense	12.0 ppg	2nd

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: West Lafayette, IN
ENROLLMENT: 36,878
STADIUM: Ross-Ade Stadium (67,861)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 9-4
COACH: Joe Tiller
CAREER: 55-37-1; **HERE:** 18-7-0
BOWL: Won Alamo (37-34 over Kansas State)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 43

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Drew Brees*	6-1	212	Jr.
RB	J. Crabtree*	5-9	201	Sr.
WR	Chris Daniels	6-3	202	Sr.
WR	Randall Lane*	6-1	205	Sr.
WR	Vinny Sutherland	5-10	188	Jr.
TE	Tim Stratton*	6-4	234	So.
LT	Matt Light*	6-4	283	Jr.
LG	Aaron Starnes*	6-3	289	Sr.
C	Jim Niedrach*	6-3	282	Sr.
RG	Chukky Okobi*	6-2	313	Jr.
RT	Brandon Gorin*	6-6	285	Jr.
K	Travis Dorsch	6-6	192	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Brian Dinkins	6-2	239	Jr.
DT	Matt Mitrione*	6-3	286	So.
DT	David Nugent*	6-5	291	Sr.
DE	Warren Moore	6-2	263	Jr.
LB	Jason Loerzel	6-3	212	So.
LB	Willie Fells*	6-1	225	Sr.
LB	Mike Rose*	6-1	238	Sr.
CB	Michael Hawthorne*	6-3	195	Sr.
CB	Da'Shann Austin*	5-10	179	Sr.
SS	Adrian Beasley*	6-0	194	Sr.
FS	Ben Smith	6-3	195	So.
P	Danny Rogers*	5-10	205	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
J. Crabtree	648	4.3	2	
Dondre Johnson	433	4.5	3	
Drew Brees	193	2.8	3	

PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Drew Brees	3,983	63.4	39	20

RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Randall Lane	67	940	14.0	7
Chris Daniels	45	473	10.5	7
Tim Stratton	38	381	10.0	7
Vinny Sutherland	31	301	9.7	3

KICKING
 Travis Dorsch, 16 of 22 FG (47 long), 48 of 50 PAT

DEFENSE			TKLS	MISC
Willie Fells	107	3 fumble rec.		
Adrian Beasley	69	2 INT		
Jason Loerzel	62	2 sacks		
Matt Mitrione	39	8 for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Central Florida	W, 35-7
Sept. 11	Notre Dame	L, 30-31
Sept. 18	Central Michigan	—
Sept. 25	Northwestern	W, 56-21
Oct. 2	at Michigan	—
Oct. 9	at Ohio State	—
Oct. 16	Michigan State	W, 25-24
Oct. 23	Penn State	L, 13-31
Oct. 30	at Minnesota	W, 56-21
Nov. 6	Wisconsin	L, 24-31
Nov. 20	at Indiana	W, 52-7

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

TOTAL RANK		
Total Offense	439.9 ypg	2nd
Total Defense	340.6 ypg	5th
Scoring Offense	34.2 ppg	2nd
Scoring Defense	21.2 ppg	5th

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

PURDUE

BOILERMAKERS

Now we'll find out. During Joe Tiller's first two years at Purdue, the Boilermakers had something of a free pass. They played Penn State and Wisconsin, and Notre Dame always loomed at the top of the non-conference slate, but Michigan and Ohio State were absent. Talk about your timing. How many Big Ten coaches have been ruined by a couple years of confrontations with the Wolverines and Buckeyes? Tiller had the luxury of avoiding those two. As one rival coach put it when he found out Purdue's Saturdays of reckoning were on their way, "It's about time."

Tiller isn't exactly shaking at the thought of playing the Big Ten's big boys. Sure, the schedule is tough, what with five teams that played in New Year's Day bowl games. That goes with being in a big-time league and daring to take on some legitimate competition outside of the conference. Because he has complete confidence in his wide-open passing system and its triggerman, Drew Brees, Tiller isn't afraid. He figures the pressure is on them to stop the Boilermakers, who line up with five wide, no backs and say, "Take a wild guess at what we're gonna do."

Year Three of the Tiller regime dawns with the mustachioed coach having proven that you can throw it 70 times a game in Big Ten country. In fact, Brees threw it 85 times last year against Wisconsin. College football has changed. Even the dinosaurs understand that. Purdue won nine games again last year and whipped an overrated, overblown Kansas State squad in the Alamo Bowl. Though this program isn't quite ready to claim itself on a par with the more established Big Ten powers, it will certainly scare each of the top dogs it plays this year—and then some.

Brees is back. There are more than enough receivers. If the defense can recover from the losses of some big-play specialists along the front line and in the secondary, this could be interesting, even with Michigan and Ohio State on the schedule. Tiller figures the two-year honeymoon was a nice plus. He's ready for the hard stuff now.

Offense

Brees was remarkable last year. The junior stepped in from day one and triggered an attack that produced huge numbers. He completed 63.4% of his throws for a league-record 3,983 yards and 39 touchdowns, both league records. He also established new Big Ten standards for attempts (569), completions (361) and total yards (4,176). Against Wisconsin, he set NCAA records with 55 completions and 83 attempts. Some scoffed that he was a product of Tiller's spread-em system. But Brees had to make the right decisions and the correct throws. He can play.

He'll have a deep posse of receivers at his disposal, led by Randall Lane (67 catches, 7 TDs), Chris Daniels (45, 7), tight end Tim Stratton (38, 7) and Vinny Sutherland (31, 3). JUCO imports Keith Dawson and Larry Shyne also figure to get plenty of work. The ground game should be all right, provided senior J. Crabtree is with the team. He was suspended during the spring for a violation of the team's academic policy but should be all right. If not, soph Dondre Johnson, who gained 433 yards last year, will take over. They'll work behind a line that returns all five starters from last year's contingent, led by guard Chukky Okobi and tackle Matt Light.

Defense

There were some big losses here, and if the Boilers want to avoid a season of trying to outscore everybody, some folks need to step up along the line and in the secondary. Gone are sackmasters Roosevelt Colvin (15), a first-team all-Big Ten choice, and Chike Okefor (8). Also to be replaced is safety Billy Gustin, who picked off four passes last year.

The line is led by soph tackle Matt Mitrione and junior end Warren Moore, with senior David Nugent handling the

other tackle position, and untested junior Brian Dinkins expected to play left end. It's not nearly as imposing a group as last year's and must get up to speed quickly.

The linebacking contingent took a hit during the spring when middle man Willie Fells was suspended due to an arrest following a domestic dispute. His status is uncertain and would create a huge hole. Senior Ray Lee, who made only nine tackles last year, would take that spot. The outside spots are in good hands, thanks to junior Mike Rose and soph Jason Loerzel, who had 62 tackles last year.

Strong safety Adrian Beasley leads the secondary and has all-conference potential, while corner Da'Shann Austin was having a strong '98 season before breaking his clavicle against Penn State. Junior Chris Clopton will play opposite him, with soph Ben Smith stepping into Gustin's role.

Special Teams

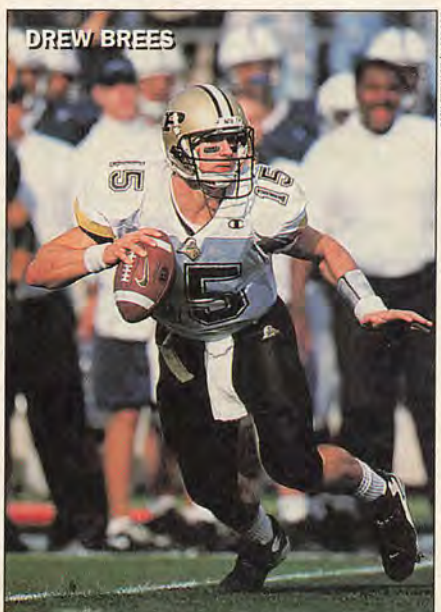
The Boilermakers are in pretty good shape here. Sophomore Travis Dorsch returns after a debut that featured 16-of-22 accuracy on place-kicks, including a respectable 6-of-9 from 40-49 yards. Senior punter Danny Rogers needs to improve on last year's 39.9-yard average, although he did stick 16 of 50 punts inside enemy 20-yard lines. Clopton is a dangerous return man, as is wideout Cliff Jackson.

New One to Know

The 5-11 Shyne was rated one of the top 15 junior-college players in the country after catching 50 passes and scoring 12 times last year. He has superior speed (hand-held 4.3 40-yard dash) and the ability to stretch practically any defense. The Boilers aren't hurting for wideouts, but Shyne should make an impact as a deep threat.

Schedule

Tiller joked during the past two years that he had Michigan and Ohio State right where he wanted them-off the schedule. They're back. So are Notre Dame, which visits West Lafayette Sept. 11, Penn State and Wisconsin, each of which come to Purdue also. October is particularly tough for Purdue. It begins with back-to-back visits with U-M and the Buckeyes. Penn State comes to town Oct. 23.



RICK STEWART/ALUSPORT

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

MICHIGAN STATE

SPARTANS

One can never be sure when the throne on which a Division I-A coach perches can officially be termed hot, but things are certainly heating up underneath Nick Saban. The man who was thought by many as the solution to the Spartans' long-term, in-state inferiority complex has fallen short of expectations. Last year's 6-6 record was particularly disappointing, particularly when many analysts, including your humble narrator, expected big things from MSU.

Instead of a run at the first division in the Big Ten, the Spartans displayed a maddening inconsistency, much like they had during the first three years of Saban's tenure. Like 1997, when Michigan State blew leads against some and came up short against others, the Spartans displayed a confounding ability to rise high one week and wallow in the mire the next. To wit: MSU opens the season with a home loss to Colorado State in a game designed to boost athletic department coffers and give the Spartans a nationally-televised forum for their progress. A disappointing loss at Oregon followed, with the Ducks hanging up 48 points on what was thought to be an imposing Spartan defense.

So what happens next? Notre Dame comes to town, all pumped up after a big win over Michigan, and the Spartans spank the Irish, 45-23, in a game that wasn't that close. Before anybody can get too excited, there is a one-point loss to Minnesota. Then comes the shocker. MSU travels to Ohio State, overcomes a two-touchdown deficit and beats the number one team in the country. See what we mean? The team was schizophrenic.

It had better end this year, Saban's fifth in East Lansing. Though recruiting has improved, and there is talent in the program, the Spartans need to win. Now. We're not talking about six triumphs and a trip to the Whogivesadamn Bowl. MSU must beat the teams it's supposed to and break even with the big boys on its schedule. That won't be easy, since Notre Dame, Michigan, Ohio State, Penn State, Wisconsin and Purdue are all lined up for a shot at the Green-and-White this year. And without running back Sedrick Irvin, who left a year early for the NFL (if the Lions can be considered that), and four defensive starters, making it through that gauntlet won't be easy. But Saban has no political capital left. Either he wins now, or he might find that his desk chair has an ejector feature and an AD not afraid to use it.

Offense Ryan Van Dyke is in a great position. As the backup passer on the Spartans, he's the most popular player on the team. But that doesn't mean Saban will push him ahead of senior Bill Burke. The best Van Dyke can hope for is a 50-50 partnership, and that isn't the best thing in the world. And it won't happen. For all of Van Dyke's talent—and he has plenty of it—Burke didn't have a bad 1998 season. In fact, he set a single-season passing yardage record. Should he boost his completion percentage higher than 54.5% and find the end zone a few more times than last year (19), the Spartans will be fine. Burke understands the offense better and should do a good job.

Whoever is throwing the ball will love working with 6-6 junior Plaxico Burress, whose 65 receptions and eight TDs last year established him as one of the nation's most exciting young players. He could have one hell of an encore this year, particularly since veteran Gari Scott (58 catches) is back to prevent double and triple-teaming. It would be nice if soph Herb Haygood and junior Lavaile Richardson could provide some depth. Haygood was an MVP of the spring game.

There is good news in the ground game—four-fifths of the offensive line is back, as is Shaun Mason, who

was supposed to start at guard last year but missed the season due to a knee injury suffered against Oregon. Senior Greg Robinson-Randall is a stalwart at tackle, while Casey Jensen should do just fine switching to center from guard. The surprise of the spring was junior-college import Tupe Peko, who arrived on campus early and took the left tackle spot from Dave Sucura, who is now starting at left guard. They'll block for any number of backs, with senior Lloyd Clemons and soph Shawn Foster the main candidates for regular work at tailback.

Defense This area needs to improve, particularly since last year's crew was supposed to be pretty imposing. Saban promises a more aggressive philosophy this year, and that should help. But the Spartans need more consistency. Up front, it's time for senior end Robaire Smith to become the force we expected him to be. Smith had just two sacks last year, not enough. The rest of the front four is serviceable, but Saban is excited about soph Hubert "Boo-Boo" Thompson, who has scads of potential. Dimitry Bernard and Kendall Daniels, a pair of JC imports, could help out at end.

Designated pass rusher Julian Peterson (10 sacks) is back to rotate between the end and outside linebacker spots. He'll put plenty of pressure on opposing attacks. The starting linebacker contingent could well be Peterson and soph Josh Thornhill on the outside, with junior T.J. Turner in the middle. Senior Mike Austin will play on passing situations, with Peterson moving to end. But look out for freshman T.J. Duckett, an imposing force who could be starting by the season's end.

The Spartans received some good news when the NCAA granted Amp Campbell a sixth year of eligibility. If his neck is healed, Campbell will line up at one corner spot, opposite junior Renaldo Hill, who picked off five passes last year. If not, Cedric Henry, a sophomore, has a lot of promise. Aric Morris returns at strong safety, after leading the team with 127 tackles last year, and junior Richard Newsome moves into the free spot, replacing departed Sorie Kanu.

Special Teams This is an undeniable strength for the Spartans. Senior Paul Edinger made 22 of 26 field goal tries last year, while soph Craig Jarrett had a fabulous debut at punter, averaging 43.8 yards. Scott is one of the nation's top punt returners and teams with Haygood to give the Spartans a fine one-two combo bringing back kicks.

New One to Know Spartan fans remember Tico Duckett as one of the school's finest players. He ranks second on the career rushing list (seventh all-time in Big Ten history) and was a stalwart on 1970s MSU teams. By the time his son, T.J., gets through in East Lansing, the Old Man may be a distant memory. Considered by some the nation's finest prep defender last year, Duckett comes to Michigan State with a reputation for big plays and could be a fixture at linebacker for a long time. He'll also be used as fullback in certain short-yardage situations.

Schedule It ain't easy. Seven bowl teams dot the slate, with two (Oregon and Notre Dame) hoping to ruin MSU's nonconference progress. Things get really tough in November, when the Spartans face Michigan, Purdue, Wisconsin and Ohio State with just one week off in between. Survive that, and Penn State still visits East Lansing on Nov. 20.

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: East Lansing, MI
ENROLLMENT: 42,603
STADIUM: Spartan Stadium (72,027)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 6-6
COACH: Nick Saban
CAREER: 34-24-1; **HERE:** 25-21-1
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 44

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Bill Burke*	6-5	200	Sr.
FB	Billy Greene	6-1	238	Sr.
TB	Lloyd Clemons	5-11	211	Sr.
SE	Plaxico Burress*	6-6	229	Jr.
FL	Gari Scott*	6-1	197	Sr.
TE	Chris Baker*	6-3	251	So.
LT	Tupe Peko	6-4	276	Jr.
LG	Dave Sucura*	6-3	286	Jr.
C	Casey Jensen*	6-7	294	Sr.
RG	Shaun Mason	6-5	275	Jr.
RT	Greg Robinson-Randall*	6-5	312	Sr.
K	Paul Edinger*	5-10	168	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Nick Myers	6-2	275	So.
DT	Jace Saylor*	6-5	285	Jr.
DT	Desmond Thomas	6-3	285	Sr.
DE	Robaire Smith*	6-5	269	Sr.
OLB	Julian Peterson*	6-4	235	Sr.
MLB	T.J. Turner*	6-2	241	Jr.
OLB	Josh Thornhill*	6-3	235	So.
CB	Amp Campbell*	6-0	200	Sr.
CB	Renaldo Hill*	5-11	170	Jr.
FS	Richard Newsome	5-11	191	Jr.
SS	Aric Morris*	5-11	207	Sr.
P	Craig Jarrett*	6-2	208	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Lloyd Clemons	364	5.0	2
Shawn Foster	126	5.7	1

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Bill Burke	2,595	54.5	19	10
Ryan Van Dyke	353	52.4	2	4

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Plaxico Burress	68	1,013	15.6	8
Gari Scott	58	843	14.5	4
Chris Baker	22	210	7.5	3

KICKING
 Paul Edinger, 22 of 26 FG (49 long), 28 of 31 PAT

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Aric Morris	127	8 for loss
Josh Thornhill	80	4 for loss
T.J. Turner	74	3 for loss
Jace Saylor	61	3 sacks
Julian Peterson	58	10 sacks
Renaldo Hill	54	5 INTs

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 2	Oregon	L, 14-48
Sept. 11	Eastern Michigan	—
Sept. 18	at Notre Dame	W, 45-23
Sept. 25	at Illinois	W, 41-9
Oct. 2	Iowa	—
Oct. 9	Michigan	L, 17-29
Oct. 16	at Purdue	L, 24-25
Oct. 23	at Wisconsin	—
Nov. 6	Ohio State	W, 28-24
Nov. 13	at Northwestern	W, 29-5
Nov. 20	Penn State	L, 28-51

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL RANK
Total Offense	375.5 ypg 4th
Total Defense	363.3 ypg 7th
Scoring Offense	28.0 ppg 4th
Scoring Defense	24.5 ppg 7th

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: Minneapolis, MN
ENROLLMENT: 37,615
STADIUM: HHH Metrodome (63,669)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 5-6
COACH: Glen Mason
CAREER: 67-79-1; **HERE:** 8-15
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 41

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Billy Cockerham*	6-1	217	Sr.
FB	Jason Andraschko	6-3	251	Fr.
RB	Thomas Hamner*	6-0	186	Sr.
WR	Luke Levenson*	6-0	181	Sr.
WR	Ron Johnson*	6-3	210	So.
TE	Alex Haas*	6-5	269	Sr.
LT	Adam Haayer*	6-6	292	Jr.
LG	Pat Hau*	6-6	323	Sr.
C	Ben Hamilton*	6-5	271	Jr.
RG	Ryan Roth*	6-3	299	So.
RT	Josh Rawlings	6-5	310	Sr.
K	Preston Gruening	5-10	183	Fr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Jon Michals*	6-4	269	Sr.
DT	Dyron Russ	6-1	304	Sr.
DT	John Schlecht*	6-1	281	Jr.
DE	Karon Riley	6-4	248	Jr.
LB	Curtese Poole*	6-3	243	Jr.
LB	Sean Hoffman*	6-3	244	Jr.
LB	Ben Mezera*	6-4	237	Jr.
CB	Willie Middlebrooks*	6-2	194	So.
CB	Travis Graham	5-10	183	Jr.
SS	Tyrone Carter*	5-9	184	Sr.
FS	Delvin Jones	6-0	184	So.
P	Ryan Rindels*	5-11	191	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Thomas Hamner	838	4.0	4
Byron Evans	327	6.4	2
Billy Cockerham	311	2.4	2

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Billy Cockerham	1,150	51.1	11	12
Andy Persby	661	42.0	3	5

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Luke Levenson	60	854	14.2	9
Ron Johnson	38	395	10.4	4
Antoine Henderson	16	178	11.1	1

KICKING

None

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Tyrone Carter	158	15 for loss
Sean Hoffman	76	4 sacks
Willie Middlebrooks	51	2 INTs
Curtese Poole	46	4 sacks
John Schlecht	46	6 sacks
Ben Mezera	42	4 sacks

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Ohio	—
Sept. 11	NE Louisiana	—
Sept. 18	Illinois State	—
Oct. 2	at Northwestern	—
Oct. 9	Wisconsin	L, 7-26
Oct. 16	at Illinois	—
Oct. 23	Ohio State	L, 15-45
Oct. 30	Purdue	L, 21-56
Nov. 6	at Penn State	L, 17-27
Nov. 13	Indiana	L, 19-20
Nov. 20	at Iowa	W, 49-7

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL RANK
Total Offense	311.7 ypg 8th
Total Defense	349.1 ypg 6th
Scoring Offense	20.8 ppg 8th
Scoring Defense	22.6 ppg 6th

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

MINNESOTA

GOLDEN GOPHERS

Talk about your good timing. With NCAA investigators poised to pounce on a Minnesota basketball program that has done everything possible in the past few months to perpetuate the dumb-jock stereotype, Glen Mason's Gopher gridders look ready to make some noise. They're talking about a bowl game in Minneapolis, and not just a skin-of-the-teeth, nobody's-watching version. Minnesota might be pretty good this year. Really. One thing is certain, you know the Gophers will be going to class. Mason doesn't need any stories about inflated grades, ghost-written term papers and stashing players in cushy majors on his watch.

Those stories may just be pushed to the background a little this year. Okay, maybe they won't be forgotten, but these Gophers have a chance to make football fun again and take some of the sting out of the inevitable purge on the hoops side. There are 19 starters back from a team that came within one point of a 6-5 record and one of the Big Ten's abundant post-season invitations. A 20-19 mid-November loss to Indiana was the culprit and quite a bitter pill indeed, particularly considering the Gophers were leading, 12-0, early on.

Things should be different this year. Minnesota ought to be more productive on defense—provided the quarterback situation is steadier. Its defense against the run will be as stout as last year's, which ranked 13th in the nation. And let's take a look at that schedule, shall we? It can't get any easier, at least in the Big Ten. First the parade of softies that comes to Minneapolis during the non-conference portion of the program. Ohio, Northeast Louisiana and Illinois State promise another 3-0 start to the year. Wait, it gets better. Michigan and Michigan State are gone, replaced by Illinois and Northwestern. Talk about your good deals.

This is not to say the Gophers are going to challenge for the Big Ten title. Let's not get carried away. But Mason has the program heading in the right direction. A bowl berth is probable. In fact, if Minnesota doesn't play in the post-season, it will be a big disappointment. Now, that's progress.

Offense Everybody's back here, but that doesn't guarantee a wide-open explosion of points. The Gophers improved from 11th (in 1997) to seventh in the conference in rushing yards last year, but they must get even better. An experienced offensive line, coupled with the return of Thomas Hamner (838 yards rushing in '98) means there is the chance for growth. But Minnesota must become more capable of sustaining a ground attack this season, the better to make it easy for quarterbacks Billy Cockerham and Andy Persby, neither of whom has proven to be a reliable passer. That's the Gophers' main offensive woe. If anybody can pass well, they'll be formidable. If not, well, thank goodness for that light schedule.

Cockerham completed only 51.1% of his passes in '98. He may be well-suited for the running responsibilities of a Mason QB, thanks to his 4.5 speed, but his arm is erratic. The same can be said for Persby, a junior with imposing physical tools but little consistency. They'll again have big-play receiver Luke Levenson (60 catches, 9 scores) at their disposal, along with possession man Ron Johnson. Swift junior Antoine Henderson has plenty of potential.

The line is in great shape, led by center Ben Hamilton, who did not commit a penalty last year. About the only question is at right tackle, where former defensive lineman Josh Rawlings steps in. If he doesn't work out, Erik Larson, who started five games at that spot last year but was moved to the left side for spring, could return.

Defense There is no secret that senior strong safety Tyrone Carter is the leader of this group. He led the team last year in tackles (127), tackles for loss (15), sacks (8) and fumble recoveries (3). He's a stud. Soph corner

Willie Middlebrooks is the other returning starter in the secondary, but there is some talent stepping in. Corner Travis Graham showed potential on special teams last year, and Delvin Jones looks to be a good candidate for the free safety spot, although SMU transfer Jack Brewer has good credentials.

With Parc Williams gone from the weak linebacker position, Curtese Poole, a starting defensive end in '98, moves back a step and should be just fine. He joins strongside man Sean Hoffman and incumbent drop backer Ben Mezera in a solid trio. Up front, Minnesota will try to continue its recent success against the run (the Gophers allowed 2.6 yards/carry last year) and in the sack department (38 in '98). Leading the way are returning starters Jon Michals, an end, and tackle John Schlecht. Another SMU transfer, Karon Riley, could be an impact player at the other end spot, while Dyron Russ looks to be the leader for the tackle vacancy.

Special Teams This is a half-empty situation, since the Gophers are excellent in the return game and shaky kicking the ball. Carter and Henderson are top-flight kick returners, while Levenson has gamebreaking potential bringing back punts. The Gophers need redshirt frosh Preston Gruening to emerge quickly at the place-kicking spot, and it wouldn't be awful if he won the punting job from Ryan Rindels (58.0 average in '98), either.

New One to Know One of the first things Mason did when he took over at Minnesota was to turn the defense loose. The Gophers play eight and nine men in the box and attack. That's great news for Karon Riley, who won the team's Defensive Demon Team award last year for his work on the scout teams while sitting out a year after transferring from SMU. Riley goes 6-4, 248 and should be a formidable presence at defensive end this year.

Schedule Like we said, this one comes directly from the football gods. Minnesota plays seven home games, with dates against Ohio, Northeast Louisiana and Illinois State starting things off and a visit to Northwestern christening the Big Ten campaign. Although Minnesota still must play four toughies, games with Wisconsin, Ohio State and Purdue are at home. Look for an upset in one of them.



LUKE LEVENSON

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

INDIANA

HOOSIERS

Well, the Hoosiers were certainly exciting last year. No doubt about that. With Antwaan Randle El taking the snap every play, Indiana couldn't help but bring fans to the edges of their seats. The dangerous signalcaller gave IU coach Cam Cameron the opportunity to turn his fertile offensive line loose.

The result, even with a 4-7 record, was a team capable of creating drama, interest and—perhaps most importantly—hope.

Indiana finished '98 out of the post-season running but certainly in better shape than it had been the previous few seasons. The Hoosiers scored points. They forced plenty of turnovers. They were exciting. Four of Indiana's seven losses came by a combined 25 points. The ship has been righted. The course is clear.

Now, however, come the defining moments. It's one thing to turn a bad team into a competitive one. The real trick is to transform a program from a valiant loser into a winner. That's Cameron's charge. Unlike other rebuilding programs, which sell their souls to youth in order to move ahead, Indiana enters '99 with plenty of experience and talent on its roster. Nineteen starters are back, including 10 on offense. The schedule isn't easy, but it does have its good points, such as seven home games, a visit from Kentucky without Tim Couch and no Ohio State. Looks good.

But some things need to change. The Hoosier offense needs to move the ball through the air more effectively than last year, when many passing situations ended with Randle El's taking off upfield. Indiana's defense, which created many turnovers last year, needs to get better against the pass and allow far fewer than the four touchdowns it surrendered last year. Like Minnesota, Iowa and Michigan State, IU has a chance at six wins and a bowl berth. It also has a chance to win just four times and wonder if the future will ever hold prosperity. We believe Cameron is the right guy to take the next step. Whether his players come along is another story.

Offense There is a tendency to criticize Randle El because of his passing shortcomings, but one must remember that he is merely a sophomore and has plenty of time to grow. That said, few players in the college game are as dangerous as Randle El running with the ball. With the position evolving into a job where mobility is vital, Randle El has that—and more. He has a good arm and now just needs to learn how to handle life in the pocket better and make defenses designed to stop his running pay with the pass. Expect redshirt freshman Tommy Jones to see some time this year. Cameron loves his size (6-4, 255), mobility and big arm.

Randle El's life would be easier if the Hoosiers had a better conventional ground game. Senior Frankie Franklin and junior Marcus Floyd showed some potential last year, but Cameron may just use junior Levron Williams, who saw time at receiver and tailback in '98. Williams came to Indiana expecting to be a franchise tailback, and he has the size and speed to do it. Don't be surprised if Williams gets the ball a lot this year.

Whoever is carrying it (and that will be Randle El often), he'll work behind a line that returns all five starters from last year, including senior tackle Pita Elisara, an honorable mention all-Big Ten player last year. Right tackle Craig Robeen is another stalwart, while guards Matt Snyder and James Broyles join center Chad Miller in a solid interior.

Junior Tyrone Browning returns at receiver after catching 47 balls last year, but he needs help. It could come from Williams, but also from JUCO import Jerry Dorsey, who caught 83 passes last year.

Defense The Hoosiers have a player with the same kind of star power as Randle El on this side of the

ball. Senior end Adewale Ogunleye became the school's all-time sack leader, en route to eight QB traps. Quick, big and strong, he is an excellent anchor up front. He's not alone. Senior tackle Damian Gregory is a talented drain plug, and junior Paul Mandina has good quickness. Cameron fortified this area with a pair of JUCO newcomers, 6-6 specimen James Atkins and Dominique Smith. Each will make the Hoosiers stronger against the run.

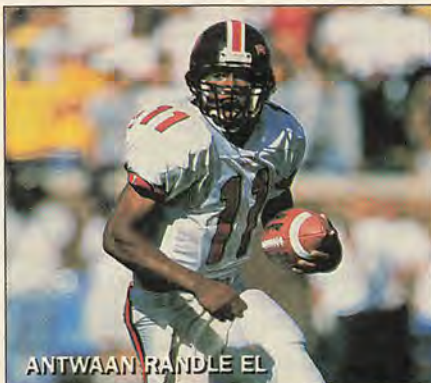
The linebacking situation is shaky, thanks to the departure of Jabar Robinson. Holdovers include seniors Brad Gecina and Pat Kraft and promising junior Tony Brown. But don't be if none of them starts. Sophomore Justin Smith, last year's strong safety, is now an outside linebacker. He'll join soph Devin Schaffer (middle) and junior Joslin Goodman in the starting rotation.

Even if Smith leaves the secondary, it's in good shape, thanks to plenty of young talent. Leading the way is soph safety Greg Yeldell, who picked off five passes last year. Senior Mike McGrath is a fine free safety, and senior Curtis Randle El is a capable corner man. Expect fortification to be provided by JUCO import Sherrod Moore, a talented corner, and true freshman Michael Hanley.

Special Teams Both kickers are back, and that's great news. Junior Andy Payne, who made 10 of 12 field goals last year and was a Groza Award semifinalist, has good accuracy and range. Senior punter Drew Hagan, however, does need to improve on last year's soft 36.2-yard average, or he could find himself watching J.R. Drummond punt. Sophomore wideout Derin Graham is a dangerous return man.

New One to Know Let's hope Syracuse fans don't see a lot of Indiana games this year. They may get upset. Junior college transfer James Atkins committed to 'Cuse out of high school but didn't qualify academically. So, the 6-6, 300-pound defensive tackle went first to Holmes JC and then to Nassau C.C., where he dominated opposing linemen with his speed (4.9 40-yard dash) and strength. This year, he's expected to team with Ogunleye on what could be an imposing defensive front. Orangemen, avert your eyes.

Schedule This one has been ordered up with a bowl game in mind. The Hoosiers start with three straight home games (Ball State, North Carolina and Kentucky). They don't play Ohio State or Michigan State. About the toughest stretch they'll see comes in October, when Indiana visits Wisconsin and Iowa and then hosts Michigan. IU fans want a post-season trip. This schedule could help them get one.



ANTWAAN RANDLE EL

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-6

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: Bloomington, IN
ENROLLMENT: 35,551
STADIUM: Memorial Stadium (52,354)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 4-7
COACH: Cam Cameron
CAREER: 6-16; **HERE:** 6-16
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 42

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Antwaan Randle El*	5-10	177	So.
FB	Jason Spear	5-11	235	Sr.
TB	Frankie Franklin*	5-11	200	Sr.
WR	O.J. Conner	6-2	176	Jr.
WR	Tyrone Browning	6-0	182	Jr.
TE	Craig Osika*	6-5	248	So.
LT	Pita Elisara*	6-5	295	Sr.
LG	Matt Snyder*	6-3	280	Sr.
C	Chad Miller*	6-4	275	Sr.
RG	James Broyles*	6-5	306	Jr.
RT	Craig Robeen*	6-5	309	Sr.
K	Andy Payne*	5-10	190	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Adewale Ogunleye*	6-5	260	Sr.
DT	Damian Gregory*	6-3	303	Sr.
DT	Paul Mandina	6-4	266	Jr.
DE	Kemp Rasmussen	6-3	255	So.
OLB	Justin Smith*	6-1	210	So.
MLB	Devin Schaffer	6-1	231	So.
OLB	Tony Brown*	6-2	240	Jr.
CB	Maurice Tucker	5-11	185	So.
CB	O.J. Spencer*	5-11	185	Jr.
FS	Mike McGrath*	5-11	195	Sr.
SS	Greg Yeldell	6-0	190	So.
P	Drew Hagan*	5-10	181	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Antwaan Randle El	873	3.8	10
Frankie Franklin	386	5.6	2
Marcus Floyd	323	4.8	1

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Antwaan Randle El	1,745	46.5	6	11

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Tyrone Browning	47	764	16.3	2
Levron Williams	15	323	21.5	2

KICKING
 Andy Payne, 10 of 12 FG (49 long), 27 of 29 PAT

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Mike McGrath	80	2 INT
Curtis Randle El	64	7 for loss
O.J. Spencer	64	3 INT
Adewale Ogunleye	56	17 for loss
Damian Gregory	54	5 sacks
Devin Schaffer	45	4 for loss

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Ball State	—
Sept. 11	North Carolina	—
Sept. 18	Kentucky	L, 27-31
Sept. 25	at Penn State	—
Oct. 2	Illinois	L, 16-31
Oct. 9	Northwestern	—
Oct. 16	at Wisconsin	L, 20-24
Oct. 23	at Iowa	W, 14-7
Oct. 30	Michigan	—
Nov. 13	at Minnesota	W, 20-19
Nov. 20	Purdue	L, 7-52

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total Offense	363.9 ypg	5th
Total Defense	390.7 ypg	10th
Scoring Offense	22.3 ppg	7th
Scoring Defense	27.7 ppg	9th

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: Iowa City, IA
ENROLLMENT: 28,705
STADIUM: Kinnick Stadium (70,397)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Kirk Ferentz
CAREER: 12-21; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 48

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Kyle McCann	6-5	190	So.
FB	Rob Thein	6-3	185	So.
RB	Ladell Betts*	5-11	204	So.
FL	Kahlil Hill*	6-3	185	So.
SE	Bashir Yamini*	6-4	190	Sr.
TE	Zeron Flemister*	6-5	240	Sr.
LT	Ben Sobieski*	6-6	300	Jr.
LG	Jay Bickford	6-4	283	Sr.
C	Chad Deal	6-5	285	Sr.
RG	Matt Rogers*	6-5	275	Sr.
RT	Alonzo Cunningham	6-4	283	So.
K	Tim Douglas	5-11	195	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
OLB	Anthony Herron	6-5	270	So.
DL	Skip Miller	6-4	260	Jr.
DL	Jerry Montgomery	6-3	290	So.
DL	Ed Saidat*	6-7	271	Sr.
OLB	Ryan Loftin*	6-4	245	Sr.
LB	Travis Senters	6-3	230	Sr.
LB	Aaron Kampman*	6-4	235	So.
CB	D.J. Johnson	5-11	180	So.
CB	Tarig Holman*	6-0	195	Sr.
FS	Ryan Hansen	6-2	200	Jr.
SS	Matt Bowen*	6-3	196	Sr.
P	Jason Baker*	6-1	195	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Ladell Betts	679	3.6	5
Rob Thein	163	3.6	0

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Kyle McCann	1,179	54.1	2	5
Randy Reiners	521	43.0	3	6
Scott Mullen	311	50.0	1	4

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Kahlil Hill	35	432	12.3	2
Bashir Yamini	31	317	10.2	0
Ryan Barton	16	310	19.4	0
Ladell Betts	20	259	12.9	0

KICKING	YDS	AVG	TD
Tim Douglas, 6 of 11 FG (58 long), 0 of 0 PAT			

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Matt Bowen	92	2 INT
Tarig Holman	60	3 INT
Aaron Kampman	49	6 sacks
Roger Meyer	46	4 for loss

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Nebraska	—
Sept. 11	at Iowa State	L, 9-27
Sept. 18	Northern Illinois	—
Oct. 2	at Michigan State	—
Oct. 9	Penn State	—
Oct. 16	at Northwestern	W, 26-24
Oct. 23	Indiana	L, 7-14
Oct. 30	at Ohio State	L, 14-45
Nov. 6	Illinois	W, 37-14
Nov. 13	at Wisconsin	L, 0-31
Nov. 20	Minnesota	L, 7-49

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total Offense	266.8 ypg	11th
Total Defense	398.9 ypg	11th
Scoring Offense	15.6 ppg	10th
Scoring Defense	26.1 ppg	8th

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

IOWA HAWKEYES

Well, Iowa AD Bob Bowlsby has his wish. It's out with the old and in with the new in the Hawkeye revenue-producing department. Hayden Fry and Tom Davis are gone. Meet Kirk Ferentz and Steve Alford, Bowlsby's choices to revitalize Iowa's signature programs.

Alford takes over on the basketball side and faces the difficult job of following a beloved boss whose team made a dream Sweet 16 run last season. But more about him in our college hoops installment. This is about Ferentz, the former Hawkeye assistant who spent his last six years as an offensive assistant and coordinator with the Baltimore Ravens.

He faces a pretty big job, since the Hawks have fallen from the ranks of the Big Ten elite during the past five years. Once considered a good bet to challenge for the conference title every few years, Iowa hasn't won a big game in ages and has watched as Wisconsin and Purdue have zoomed past it in the league's hierarchy. Getting back won't be easy, particularly since Fry was able to build the Hawks into a Big Ten power at a time when only Michigan and Ohio State fit that description. Those two, along with Penn State, are entrenched on the national scene now, with the Badgers not far behind. Purdue is closing fast, while the other conference schools are in various stages of rebuilding. Each will have its day, if history holds.

So, Ferentz must conquer all of that. He brings to town some solid credentials. His Hawkeye offensive lines were extremely successful, and his Ravens offensive units scored plenty of points, even if the team's defense couldn't keep up. He's young (43), gregarious and possesses the qualities every AD is searching for these days. His teams will no doubt be tougher, more enthusiastic and perhaps more creative than those in Fry's later years.

That doesn't mean he'll be more successful than his predecessor. Keep in mind that Fry took the Hawkeyes from nothing, at a time when college football had no patience for the great unwashed, to Rose Bowl participants.

That was unheard of in the early '80s. Ferentz must now navigate the treacherous waters of perhaps the nation's most balanced and powerful (5-0 in bowl games last year) conference and satisfy a fan base that longs for the old days.

His resume would suggest he can do it. The return of 48 lettermen from an extremely young team and a schedule that avoids Michigan and Purdue will help. Bowlsby made a good choice, although he could have let Fry stick around another year. The Hawkeyes may well win six or seven this year, not a bad way to start out a new era.

Offense Ferentz's bio raves about how productive Iowa's offenses were when he was the team's line coach. That's good, because the Hawks were last in the conference in total and rushing offense last year and need a huge overhaul. The challenge starts at quarterback, where three players rotated because of injury and inconsistency. Senior Randy Reiners, soph Kyle McCann and junior Scott Mullen all return after experiencing varying degrees of success. Reiners brings the most to the equation, in terms of experience and mobility, but nothing is guaranteed.

If the quarterback position is settled and productive, Ferentz can feel somewhat at ease, but Iowa needs an immediate upgrade on the ground. Even though gifted tailback Ladell Betts set a school freshman record with 679 yards last year, he averaged just 3.6 yards/carry and scored but five times. But don't blame him. Betts is a big talent who should threaten 1,000 yards this year. It's the Hawkeye offensive line that is most culpable. In addition to providing precious little breathing room for Betts and fullback Rob Thein, the fivesome also allowed Iowa quarterbacks to be sacked 52 times. Expect an immediate improvement, if only because Ferentz will dedicate considerable attention to making his old area respectable

again.

Tackles Ben Sobieski and Matt Rogers return from last year's starting unit, although Rogers has been switched to right guard to make room for soph Alonzo Cunningham. Junior college import A.J. Blazek could see immediate time at a guard or center position.

The receiving corps is deep and has potential. Soph Kahlil Hill and senior Bashir Yamini will start, but juniors Kevin Kasper and Ryan Barton have big-play abilities.

Defense Don't blame last year completely on the offense. Iowa was last in the conference in total defense, too, despite having an all-America lineman, Jared DeVries. DeVries is gone, along with four other starters, including linebacker Matt Hughes and defensive back Eric Thigpen. With DeVries gone, a line that was pushed around needs to get husky, but quick. Senior end Ed Saidat had five sacks and 11 stops for negative yardage last year and is a good start, but youngsters like sophs Anthony Herron and Jerry Montgomery must produce right away, or the Hawks will be dominated on the ground again.

Soph Aaron Kampman showed some promise in nine games at inside linebacker last year, accumulating six sacks and showing the ability to make big plays. He and seniors Ryan Loftin and Travis Senters should form a solid trio. Senior strong safety Matt Bowen, who led the Hawks with 92 tackles last year, heads a secondary that also includes senior corner Tarig Holman, who tied for the team lead with three interceptions last year. New starters Ryan Hansen (free safety) and D.J. Johnson (corner) are green and should be pushed by JC imports Derrick Davison and Cameron Smith. New coordinator Norm Parker, who helped make Vanderbilt formidable, may not have a pile of all-stars at his disposal, but he has proven himself capable of crafting schemes that can frustrate and sometimes dominate rivals.

Special Teams Senior Tim Douglas, who handled the long-range placements last year and made 6-of-9 from 40 and beyond (6-of-11 overall), will handle the kicking, while junior Jason Baker, who averaged 39.8 yards on a whopping 76 punts last year, needs to improve. Hill is an extremely dangerous return man, who brought back two punts and one kickoff for scores in '98. He is one of the nation's biggest weapons in this department.

New One to Know We weren't supposed to know anything about Aaron Kampman last year. He started the season as a redshirt, practicing but seeing no time. Two games into the season, however, he was enlisted for full duty and made 49 tackles. This year, Kampman should get the full star treatment, now that standouts like Jared DeVries and Eric Thigpen are gone. Ferentz probably wishes Kampman hadn't been used last year, so that he would have four years of eligibility remaining, but he'll probably be pretty happy to get three years out of the future star.

Schedule When Bowlsby agreed to host Nebraska a few years ago, he no doubt thought it would be a great incentive to season-ticket holders. He didn't, however, expect his new coach would have to face the Huskers in his debut. The game's in Iowa City, but that shouldn't matter too much. There goes Ferentz's hopes for a perfect record. The rest of the slate isn't too unreasonable. As we mentioned earlier, Michigan and Purdue are gone. Iowa does have to visit Michigan State, Ohio State and Wisconsin, but it could be worse. If the Hawks can win a toss-up game or two (MSU, Minnesota, Indiana), they might be looking at six wins.

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7

NORTHWESTERN

WILDCATS

Randy Walker arrives in Evanston at a crucial juncture in Northwestern football history. After shocking the NCAA with its Rose Bowl run back in 1995, the Wildcats slipped slowly back to their customary spot in the conference hierarchy, a trip that culminated with last year's 0-8 last-place finish. If Walker doesn't do something quickly, the Purple's trip to Pasadena will be nothing but a fond memory, rather than an indication that the program was in contention to stay.

In a way, it's amazing that Gary Barnett remained so hot, even as the Wildcat fortunes sagged. Despite a 3-9 '98 mark, Barnett still snagged a major deal to take over at Colorado, with administrators there conveniently forgetting that his tenure in Evanston could be charted with a parabola: Northwestern was poor, great and poor again. Funny what a couple big years and some shrewd career management can do for a guy.

So, here comes Walker, promising a straight ahead, tough-guy approach to football. The Wildcats' spring drills were characterized by manhood-enhancing drills, designed to make the team more physical. Northwestern's offense will feature a power running game, while its defense will attack, attack, attack. Sounds good, provided there is some talent in the fold. That answer isn't as clear. Northwestern will be young. It will have a few true play-makers. But its offensive front is young. Its defense was generous last year and must become more consistent. Like it or not, another year or two like '98, and the Wildcats may just revert to their historical doormat status.

Walker brings an impressive resume with him from Miami (Ohio). He has plenty of confidence in his ability. But he is recruiting to the Big Ten's toughest academic environment and is not the coach who took Northwestern to the Rose Bowl four years ago. Northwestern needs to make an immediate statement to prove it still belongs among the conference's better teams. If it doesn't, Barnett may look like a genius for getting out.

Offense Walker has promised a more effective, tougher running game this year, with fewer adjustments at the line of scrimmage and more straight ahead plays. That's why he spent so much time during spring drills with backs Damien Anderson and Kevin Lawrence, who will split time as the featured back this season. Neither was overly impressive last year, although Anderson did flash some talent, and Lawrence has good speed. They'll run behind a line led by left guard Brian Hemmerle, who missed the spring while recovering from surgery to repair a torn ACL. Expected to join him at guard is Lance Clelland, with Mark Perry moving from guard to center. Blake Henry and Mike Souza are the tacklers.

Gavin Hoffman and Nick Kreinbrink duelled for the starting QB spot, with Hoffman expected to be under center when the season begins. He had a solid '98 season, completing 54.5% of his passes for 2,199 yards and 13 scores. But he threw 14 interceptions. Don't expect to see him throwing downfield as much this year, as part of Walker's simpler offense. When he does throw, expect to see soph Sam Simmons on the receiving end often. Walker moved Simmons from running back to receiver, the better to use his breakaway speed. He could be a dangerous weapon.

Defense After years as a read-and-react team, the Wildcats will be more of a one-gap, attacking unit. That's good news for a deep front four, led by tackle Jeff Dyra, who had a great spring, and end Dwayne Missouri, whom Walker believes has tremendous potential. Salem Simon should be the other end, with Darryl Hodge lining up next to Dyra. Expect seven or eight different players to see a lot of time along the line. Whoever's there had better get some more pressure on the passer. Northwestern regis-

tered just 19 sacks last year.

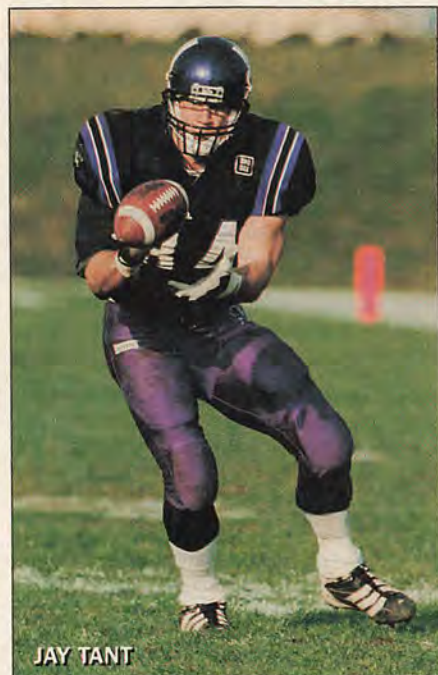
When Pat Fitzgerald and Barry Gardner played in Evanston, rival offenses were funneled toward them on the outside. Walker will try to send traffic into the middle this year, and that means plenty of work for returning starter Conrad Emmerich, who goes 6-5, 255. Napoleon Harris and Kevin Bentley will flank him.

Strong safety Mycal Jones is a proven performer, and corner Harold Blackmon picked off a pair of passes last year. Expect Rashad Morton to play the free safety spot, with Shegun Cummings-John and Raheem Covington expected to fill out the corner rotation.

Special Teams Simmons is one of the nation's top return men, a fact he proved by averaging 27.6 yards on his kickoff returns last year. Junior J.J. Standing had a strong, 41.5-yard punting average in '98, but the Wildcats need to replace prolific field goal kicker Brian Gowins. Expect senior Tim Long to put his big leg to use in that role.

New One to Know Quarterback Zak Kustok, who originally signed with Notre Dame but decided to leave town prior to the '98 season when it was clear he would not get ahead of Arnaz Battle on the depth chart, is a tough lefty who may just compete for some time this year. Kustok didn't put up huge numbers in high school but led his team to an 11-1 record as a junior and has the raw tools—arm, feet, smarts—to be a future success.

Schedule How's this for irony? The Wildcats open the '99 season by hosting Walker's previous employer, Miami (Ohio). After hosting resurgent TCU and visiting Duke, Northwestern embarks on a Big Ten campaign that doesn't include Ohio State and Penn State. That's good news. About the only real tough stretch on the '99 slate starts Oct. 30, when Wisconsin visits, followed by a trip to Michigan and a home date with Michigan State.



JAY TANT

PROJECTED RECORD: 3-8

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: Evanston, IL
ENROLLMENT: 7,400
STADIUM: Ryan Field (47,130)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-9
COACH: Randy Walker
CAREER: 59-35-5; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 39

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Gavin Hoffman*	6-5	237	Jr.
FB	Ian Miller	5-10	237	Sr.
RB	Damien Anderson*	5-11	198	Jr.
WR	Teddy Johnson	5-11	184	Jr.
WR	Sam Simmons	5-10	202	So.
TE	Jay Tant*	6-3	254	Sr.
LT	Mike Souza*	6-6	285	Jr.
LG	Brian Hemmerle*	6-6	315	Sr.
C	Mark Perry*	6-4	274	Sr.
RG	Lance Clelland*	6-5	301	Jr.
RT	Blake Henry*	6-6	283	So.
K	Tim Long	6-1	195	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Dwayne Missouri*	6-5	252	Sr.
DT	Darryl Hodge*	6-3	281	Sr.
DT	Jeff Dyra*	6-4	290	Sr.
DE	Salem Simon	6-4	257	Jr.
OLB	Kevin Bentley	6-1	226	So.
MLB	Conrad Emmerich*	6-5	255	Sr.
OLB	Napoleon Harris*	6-3	230	Jr.
CB	Harold Blackmon*	6-0	197	Sr.
CB	Shegun Cummings-John	5-11	196	Jr.
FS	Rashad Morton	5-11	213	Sr.
SS	Mycal Jones*	5-11	204	Jr.
P	J.J. Standing*	6-0	202	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Damien Anderson		537	3.3	4	
Brian Marshall		296	3.0	0	
Sam Simmons		124	4.0	1	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Gavin Hoffman		2,199	54.5	13	14
Nick Kreinbrink		189	50.0	1	1
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jay Tant		30	327	10.9	2
Damien Anderson		10	79	7.9	0
KICKING		None			
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Preston Letts		73	3 for loss		
Mycal Jones		66	4 for loss		
Conrad Emmerich		62	—		
Harold Blackmon		37	—		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Miami (Ohio)	—
Sept. 11	Texas Christian	—
Sept. 18	at Duke	L, 10-44
Sept. 25	at Purdue	L, 21-56
Oct. 2	Minnesota	—
Oct. 9	at Indiana	—
Oct. 16	Iowa	L, 24-26
Oct. 30	Wisconsin	L, 7-38
Nov. 6	at Michigan	L, 6-12
Nov. 13	Michigan State	L, 5-29
Nov. 20	at Illinois	L, 10-13

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total Offense	295.5 ypg	9th
Total Defense	369.2 ypg	8th
Scoring Offense	17.8 ppg	9th
Scoring Defense	28.1 ppg	10th

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

Big Ten Conference

LOCATION: Champaign-Urbana, IL
ENROLLMENT: 36,000
STADIUM: Memorial Stadium (70,904)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Ron Turner
CAREER: 10-26; **HERE:** 3-19
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 41

ILLINOIS

FIGHTING ILLINI

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Kurt Kittner	6-3	205	So.
TB	Elmer Hickman*	6-1	230	Sr.
FB	Steve Havard*	5-10	205	Sr.
FL	Lenny Willis*	5-9	178	Sr.
SE	Greg Lewis	6-0	180	Fr.
TE	Josh Whitman	6-4	244	Jr.
LT	Marques Sullivan*	6-5	315	Jr.
LG	Jay Kulaga	6-5	305	So.
C	Luke Butkus	6-4	285	So.
RG	Ray Redziniak*	6-3	290	So.
RT	Chip Nicastro	6-6	295	Sr.
K	Neil Rackers*	6-0	195	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Rameel Connor*	6-3	260	Sr.
DT	Mike McGee*	6-3	285	Sr.
DT	Brandon Moore	6-3	280	So.
DE	Fred Wakefield	6-7	265	Jr.
OLB	Danny Clark*	6-2	225	Sr.
MLB	Eric Guenther*	6-2	235	Sr.
OLB	Mike Young*	6-2	225	Jr.
CB	Tony Francis*	6-2	200	Sr.
CB	Johnny Rogers	5-9	170	Sr.
SS	Asim Pleas*	5-10	180	Sr.
FS	Muhammad Abdullah*	6-1	195	So.
P	Steve Fitts*	6-0	180	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Rocky Harvey		634	4.7	6	
Steve Havard		564	4.5	5	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Kurt Kittner		782	44.4	1	7
Kirk Johnson		427	61.8	2	3
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Lenny Willis		26	301	11.6	0
Elmer Hickman		19	158	8.3	0
Michael Dean		18	242	13.4	0
Larry Davis		17	263	15.5	0
KICKING					
Neil Rackers, 7 of 10 FG (46 long), 14 of 16 PAT					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Danny Clark		115	10 for loss		
Robert Franklin		86	4 for loss		
Asim Pleas		60	3 INT		
Bobby Jackson		51	—		
Mike Young		49	5 for loss		
Rameel Connor		35	10 for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Arkansas State	—
Sept. 11	San Diego State	—
Sept. 18	at Louisville	L, 9-35
Sept. 25	Michigan State	L, 9-41
Oct. 2	at Indiana	W, 31-16
Oct. 16	Minnesota	—
Oct. 23	at Michigan	—
Oct. 30	Penn State	L, 0-27
Nov. 6	at Iowa	L, 14-37
Nov. 13	at Ohio State	L, 0-41
Nov. 20	Northwestern	W, 13-10

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total Offense	287.9 ypg	10th
Total Defense	370.4 ypg	9th
Scoring Offense	13.5 ppg	11th
Scoring Defense	29.6 ppg	11th

(Rank is Big Ten ranking)

Ron Turner promised progress, and he delivered. Granted, a 3-8 record isn't reason for celebration, but when it comes on the heels of an 0-11 debacle and includes a pair of Big Ten victories, it certainly isn't greeted with the same catcalls and hoots that might accompany such a performance in, say, Ann Arbor or Columbus. Illinois was a dreadful football team in 1997. Last year, the Illini were upgraded to bad. Hey, these things take time.

The opportunity for a leap to mediocre is entirely possible in '99. That's not mere sarcasm. When Turner took over as head coach, he faced a mammoth rebuilding project. Not only did he have to improve the talent level within the program considerably he also had to change a culture that had been grounded in 1970s football principles. Lou Tepper is a fine man and a defensive genius, but his inattention to offense and undying devotion to the read-and-react defensive scheme he perfected set the Illini back. Turner's mission upon arriving in Champaign was extremely difficult.

His early progress is encouraging. The Illini have had a pair of solid recruiting classes and are importing some players capable of competing on the Big Ten level. This year's challenge will be to continue improving an offense that managed just 149 points last year and making the Illini defense tougher against the pass. The continued development of quarterback Kurt Kittner and expected growth of tailback Rocky Harvey will go a long way toward making the former come true. Some JUCO help, coupled with a general defensive maturation will take care of the latter.

There will be no bowl for the Illini this year. But four wins are possible, particularly with a pair of non-conference home games (Arkansas State and San Diego State) that could go in the book as victories. Illinois will continue taking small steps forward, and fans are advised to be patient. This will take a while. Then again, you already knew that.

Offense Turner says he feels better about the quarterback position than he has at any time during his tenure at Illinois. Cynics might say that's because incoming freshman Christian Morton is more talented than anybody Turner has under center now. That's not necessarily true, but Morton is a good one. For '99, however, Turner will choose from soph Kurt Kittner and senior Kirk Johnson, each of whom was erratic last year. Kittner has quick feet and a good arm and should be less prone to mistakes this year (he threw seven interceptions and one TD pass in '98), while Johnson's experience makes him a steady presence. Both will play.

The emergence of soph Rocky Harvey last year (team-leading 634 yards) makes the tailback position strong. Harvey and junior Steve Havard (564) each averaged 4.5 yards or better per carry and combined for 11 touchdowns. That's not bad. Expect to see Harvey all over the field, as Turner tries to get him the ball as often as possible. Illinois was ranked sixth in the league in rushing last year and should be better in '99. The problem is that both will be operating behind a revamped offensive line. Although Turner likes the group's toughness and athletic ability, he admits it will take time for the contingent to become top-flight. Expect left tackle Marques Sullivan and right guard Ray Redziniak to lead the way, with soph center Luke Butkus expected to chase stardom.

The Illinois receiving corps underwent a radical

transformation during the spring, with unheralded freshman walk-on Greg Lewis, who quit the team last fall, grabbing a starting position, along with senior Lenny Willis. Watch for redshirt freshman Aaron Moorehead, who looked good in the spring and true frosh Dwayne Smith, who could make an immediate impact.

Defense The Illini have some experience here but need a standout, now that tackle Garrett Johnson is gone. Ends Rameel Connor and Fred Wakefield showed promise last year, and senior Mike McGee has leadership potential at one tackle. Junior college newcomer Terrell Washington brings speed and coverage abilities to the end spot and could be a valuable weapon on passing downs. The Illini need one, since they managed just 25 sacks last year.

The undisputed linebacking leader is senior outside man Danny Clark, who made a team-high 115 tackles last year. He has excellent speed and makes plenty of big plays. Junior Mike Young appears set on the other side, while senior Eric Guenther and junior Robert Franklin form a solid tandem in the middle. Guenther missed all but the first two games of last year with a knee injury and has been granted a medical redshirt for this year. He's a tackling machine. Franklin, meanwhile, made 86 tackles last year.

The secondary had plenty of depth until strong safety Bobby Jackson tore his ACL during the last week of spring drills. That meant senior Asim Pleas (three interceptions) had to move to strong safety. Tony Francis returns to the corner after a steady '99 and should be joined by senior Johnny Rogers. If the vets can't get it done, look for JC import Trayvon Waller, a sticky corner, to see more time. At worst, the Illini will have more options in their nickel and dime packages. Soph Muhammad Abdullah impressed as an emergency starter at free safety last year. Depth is a huge problem there, a condition that could open the door for freshman Marc Jackson.

Special Teams The Illini are in pretty good shape here. Soph Steve Fitts had an impressive debut, averaging 41.5 yards on 77 punts last year. Senior Neil Rackers made 7-of-10 field goal tries last year and has a solid leg. Harvey has the potential to be a fine kick returner, but the Illini need help returning punts. Harvey is a candidate, as is Smalls.

New Face to Know There's a reason Macklin is considered one of this year's top recruits in the Big Ten: versatility. A wide receiver, running back and linebacker at Proviso East HS in Maywood, IL, Macklin did a little bit of everything. At Illinois, he'll be asked to bring speed and big-play ability to a defense in desperate need of it. The 6-1, 220-pounder may not start right away, but he'll make an immediate impact.

Schedule This isn't easy, by any means, but it isn't overwhelming, either. The Illini open with home games against weak Arkansas State and San Diego State, which doesn't always travel well. The Big Ten schedule does not include Wisconsin or Purdue, although Michigan does return after a two-year hiatus. The toughest stretch comes later in the year, when Illinois must play Michigan, Penn State and Ohio State in a four-week window.

PROJECTED RECORD: 2-9

INSIDE THE BIG TEN

TEAM ON THE RISE: Minnesota. The Gophers still have some work to do on offense. Okay, they have a lot of work to do on offense. And their pass defense isn't exactly going to make people quake. A bowl berth, however, is on the horizon. Minnesota's strength against the run, its emerging power ground attack and a post-season-friendly schedule make the Gophers a group to watch.

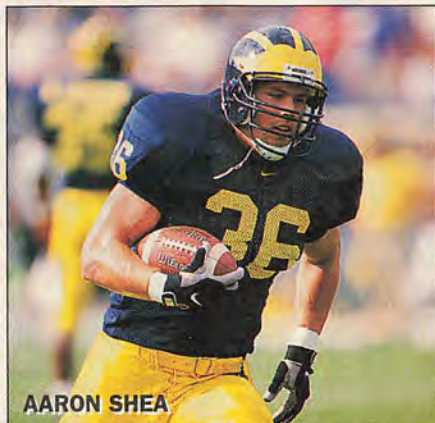
TEAM ON THE FALL: Purdue. This won't be a big fall, believe us, but there should be what stock market watchers term "a minor adjustment" in the Boilers' fortunes. First, the defense lost some big-play types (Rosevelt Colvin, Chike Okefor). Then there's the schedule, which includes five New Year's Day bowl participants and Michigan and Ohio State for the first time in two years. Purdue will still be good, but nine wins may be asking too much.

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Drew Brees, QB, Purdue. Just because the Boilers might slip doesn't mean Brees still won't throw for nine miles and a bunch of touchdowns. He's perfect for coach Joe Tiller's rapid-fire offense and should get considerable all-America mention.

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: LaVar Arrington, LB, Penn State. Linebacker U. has never had anybody like this. Arrington has the speed, athletic ability and instincts to be a first-rate running back. Instead, he terrorizes enemy ballcarriers and quarterbacks with his myriad skills. This is the year he becomes a full-fledged national sensation.

MUST-SEE GAMES: 1. Arizona at Penn State, August 28. Both teams have national championship aspirations. We'll find out if the Wildcat defense has improved and if PSU quarterback Kevin Thompson is ready for a big year, or whether Joe Paterno turns to backup Rashard Casey. **2. Notre Dame at Michigan, Sept. 4.** The teams take a two-year hiatus from the rivalry after this year's meeting, which always captures the nation's imagination. **3. Michigan at Penn State, Nov. 13.** The Wolverines have beaten the Nittany Lions by a combined 53 points the last two years. Think JoePa wants some revenge?

MOST UNDERRATED PLAYER: Aaron Shea, FB, Michigan. He may only get about 10 carries this year, but in a power running attack like the Wolverines' Shea's role is vital. Take a minute away from watching TB Anthony Thomas to see Shea block. He's one of the best.



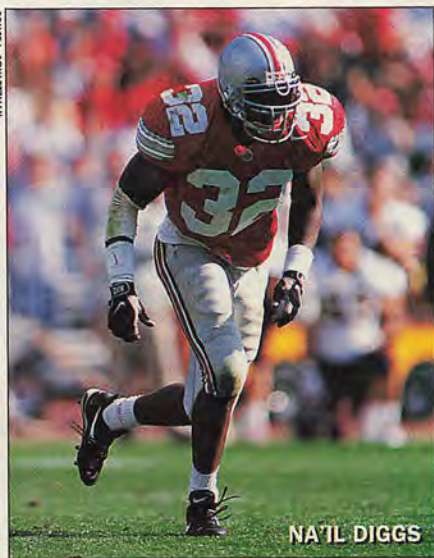
AARON SHEA

NEXT STOP, NFL: 1. Arrington. Is he an end? Is he an outside linebacker? Is he great? You bet. **2. Anthony Thomas, TB, Michigan.** He should get 20-25 carries a game this year and has the size (6-2, 221) and speed to threaten 1,500 yards. **3. Na'il Diggs, LB, Ohio State.** Lost in the furor over Andy Katzenmoyer was Diggs' consistently spectacular performance. A sideline-to-sideline terror, Diggs makes two or three big plays a game.

JOHNNY ON THE SPOT: Steve Bellisari/Austin Moherman, QBs, Ohio State. The Buckeyes have a great offensive line. The defensive front may be even better. There are stars in the skill spots and playmakers at linebacker and in the secondary. All they need is a triggerman. Will it be the electric Bellisari or the productive Moherman? Whoever gets the keys is driving a turbo-charged machine.

RECRUITING WINNERS AND LOSERS: It was the usual mother lode for the Big Two in the conference, with Michigan piling up the speed and Ohio State getting plenty of defensive help (not to mention some skill studs). But the big surprise this year was Illinois, which grabbed big-timers like linebacker Philip Macklin, defensive back Marc Jackson and offensive linemen Aaron Hodges. That's two in a row for coach Ron Turner. Michigan State helped itself immensely by winning the battle for in-state linebacking standout TJ. Duckett, thought by some to be the nation's top defensive recruit. Penn State didn't get a quarterback, and its class was small, but the Lions did ink some needed speed in athlete Bryan Scott, wideouts Bryant Johnson and Yaacov Yisreal and running back Horace Dodd. Bringing up the rear was Iowa, which got a late start under new coach Kirk Ferentz but should rally in '00.

ODDS AND ENDS: Two Big Ten schools start the season early this year. Penn State hosts Arizona in the Pigskin Classic, while Ohio State travels to north Jersey to take on resurgent Miami in the Kickoff Classic. The coaching turnover continues in the league, with Kirk Ferentz's taking over at Iowa and Randy Walker's stepping in at Northwestern. That makes eight new coaches in the last five years and six in the past three. Penn State coach Joe Paterno passed the 300-win milestone last year and is now taking aim at Bear Bryant's all-time record of 323. If Paterno can win 10 this year, not a bad bet, considering the Lions will play 13 times (including a bowl), he'll probably pass the Bear in early November, 2000. The league reshuffles the schedule this year after two seasons of stability. Minnesota is a big winner, since it trades Michigan and Michigan State for Illinois and Northwestern. Purdue gets stung by the new slate, adding Michigan and Ohio State in place of Illinois and Iowa. Northwestern's Randy Walker opens up his new tenure by hosting his old employer, Miami (Ohio).



NA'IL DIGGS

BIG TEN
MINI-FEATUREJilted, but
Not Depressed

Big Ten commissioner Jim Delaney doesn't sound like a jilted suitor when he revisits Notre Dame's February decision to turn down the conference's offer to join up. Even though the pursuit was extremely public and ended with Delaney's league taking some shots from Notre Dame alumni, he hasn't locked himself in the Big Ten's offices and taken to the couch to watch endless love-gone-wrong movies and drown himself in a sea of beer and junk food.

He hasn't even returned the ring. Delaney knows it might just fit somebody else down the line.

"We feel like expansion for the sake of expansion is not right," Delaney says. "Notre Dame was worth taking the risk to pursue."

Had the Fighting Irish joined up, the Big Ten would have become a two-division confederation with a symmetrical football schedule and a lucrative championship game. But the Irish, particularly their alumni, decided that independence on the gridiron (ND doesn't seem to have a problem aligning its "Olympic" sports with the Big East) was a tradition worth keeping. Once the decision became final, not to mention extremely public, the Big Ten waited. It didn't run to Missouri, Texas, Syracuse, Nebraska or any of the other schools mentioned as possible 12th members. The holding pattern remains in effect. The conference doesn't seem to be expanding any time soon.

"We didn't want to seem to be in a reactive mode," Delaney says. "Any decision like (expansion) needs to be reflective and objective."

While the conference contemplates its future, expansion is definitely on the horizon. Delaney doesn't provide any definitive timetable, but it's clear that an 11-team league is somewhat unwieldy, particularly on the gridiron. Last year's split title that sent Wisconsin to the Rose Bowl ahead of Ohio State is a perfect example of that. The teams didn't play each other during the regular season and had no chance to meet in a title game. On the other hand, having a pair of once-defeated schools did allow the conference to reap the windfall of two top-tier BCS games.

Delaney doesn't expect expansion to be discussed again until later in the year. But it will surface again, and the schools to be considered remain pretty standard. Right now, Missouri seems to make the most sense, from a geographic and philosophic standpoint. And the school's St. Louis market would add some pop to the conference's demographic profile, and ultimately, its coffers. That much, Delaney insists, is essential to any consideration given a candidate. The Big Ten didn't get the big fish, but the pond remains stocked. Expect the conference to walk down the aisle not long after the new Millennium dawns.

Sometimes the second choice turns out to be the right one.

Big Twelve

BY RUSTY BURSON

CONFERENCE

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Major Applewhite	Texas	6-1	195	So.
RB	Ricky Williams ^(o)	Texas Tech	5-8	190	Jr.
RB	Nathan Simmons	Oklahoma State	5-10	197	Sr.
WR	Kwame Cavil	Texas	6-2	200	Jr.
WR	Aaron Lockett	Kansas State	5-7	155	So
TE	Kyle Allamon	Texas Tech	6-3	256	Sr.
OL	Adam Davis	Oklahoma State	6-4	280	Sr.
OL	Jonathan Gray	Texas Tech	6-5	357	Jr.
OL	Ryan Johanningmeier	Colorado	6-7	310	Sr.
OL	Rob Riti	Missouri	6-3	285	Sr.
OL	Semisi Heimuli	Texas A&M	6-2	303	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DL	Darren Howard ^(d)	Kansas State	6-4	270	Sr.
DL	Aaron Humphrey	Texas	6-3	255	Sr.
DL	Corey Callens	Oklahoma	6-1	266	Jr.
LB	Eric Johnson	Nebraska	6-1	205	Sr.
LB	Kenyatta Wright	Oklahoma State	6-1	245	Sr.
LB	Mark Simoneau	Kansas State	6-0	240	Sr.
LB	Roylin Bradley	Texas A&M	6-1	221	Jr.
DB	Damen Wheeler	Colorado	5-10	175	Sr.
DB	Ralph Brown	Nebraska	5-10	180	Sr.
DB	Jason Webster	Texas A&M	5-10	178	Sr.
DB	Gary Baxter	Baylor	6-1	193	Jr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
PK	Kris Stockton	Texas	5-9	185	Jr.
P	Shane Lechler	Texas A&M	6-2	215	Sr.
KR	David Allen	Kansas State	5-9	195	Jr.

^(o) Offensive Player of the Year ^(d) Defensive Player of the Year

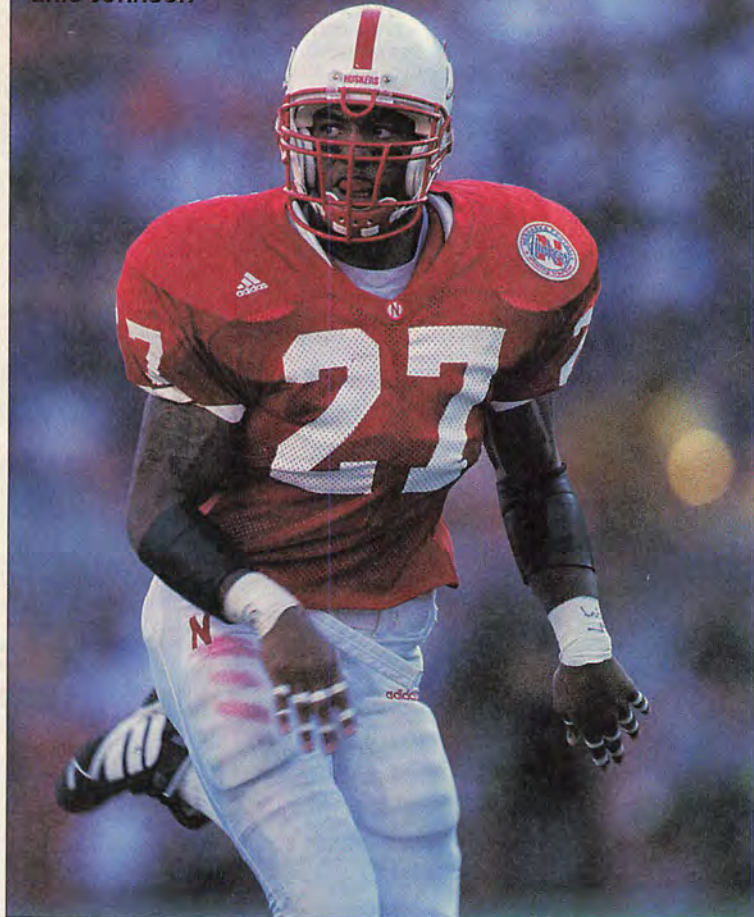
PROJECTED FINISH

NORTH DIVISION		CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1.	Nebraska	8-0	11-1
2.	Kansas State	6-2	9-2
3.	Colorado	6-2	8-3
4.	Missouri	3-5	6-5
5.	Kansas	2-6	5-7
6.	Iowa State	0-8	2-9
SOUTH DIVISION		CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1.	Texas A&M	7-1	11-1
2.	Texas	5-3	8-4
3.	Oklahoma State	4-4	7-4
4.	Texas Tech	4-4	6-5
5.	Oklahoma	2-6	4-7
6.	Baylor	1-7	3-8

BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Texas A&M over Nebraska

ERIC JOHNSON



AUBREY WASHINGTON/ALLSPORT

NEBRASKA

CORNHUSKERS

Fans from most other schools would be thrilled by it. Coaches from most other schools would be proud of it. And players at most other schools would boast about it. At Nebraska, however, fans, coaches and players find it difficult to accept. "It" is the Cornhuskers' 9-4 record in 1998, which represents more losses in one season than the Huskers endured in the previous five, as Big Red rolled to an amazing 60-3 record from 1993-97.

But here's a few words of consolation to Nebraska faithful and a warning to those who snickered at the Huskers' brief bout with mediocrity (by their standards): It probably won't happen again. At least not in 1999.

Under any circumstances, head coach Frank Solich was challenged by a nearly impossible mission in 1998. Not only was Solich taking over for the legendary Tom Osborne, but he also inherited a team that had lost its star power from the previous national championship season. To make matters worse, Nebraska was devastated by injuries that forced nine would-be starters from the beginning depth chart to miss 45 regular-season games.

If the Huskers can avoid last year's injury epidemic, things could again return to normal in Lincoln. Nebraska returns 19 players with significant starting experience from 1998, which should make Solich's second season far more enjoyable. Nebraska isn't overpowering, as it was when Osborne's final teams won three national titles in four years. But the 1999 version is powerful enough to be considered the favorite in the Big 12 North and a contender for bigger prizes.

Offense Quarterbacks Bobby Newcombe and Eric Crouch each started six games last season, and each suffered injuries which kept them out of at least five games. But both displayed some impressive talents in 1998, and their return gives NU experience and depth at this key position that few teams can match. The situation is also similar at I-back, where DeAngelo Evans, Dan Alexander and Correll Buckhalter are each capable of surpassing the 1,000-yard mark—if they stay healthy.

The biggest difference at Nebraska last season was that the offensive line failed to dominate many foes. That could begin to change this year, as Solich welcomes back three starters—a big difference from last year when four new starters began the season. The leader of the offensive line is probably senior left tackle Adam Julch (6-5, 320), but the strength of the group is its unity. Last offseason, the offensive linemen decided as a group to work out four days a week at 7 a.m. No one missed a workout, and the top five gained 21 pounds of lean muscle weight and lost 10 percent body fat.

The Huskers also has one of the school's most productive receivers returning in junior split end Matt Davison. Last year, Davison had the most receptions for the Huskers in a single season (32) since Irving Fryar caught 40 back in 1983.

Defense The Nebraska defensive line doesn't look overpowering, but the Huskers are rock solid everywhere else. The secondary, with the return of Mike Brown, Erwin Swiney, Clint Finley and Ralph Brown, could be one of the better units in the nation, which should help the Cornhuskers limit opposing passing attacks better last year when Nebraska gave up almost 200 passing yards per game. Mike Brown and Ralph Brown (no relation) share a common last name, but they have a chance to be uncommonly good defensive backs in 1999.

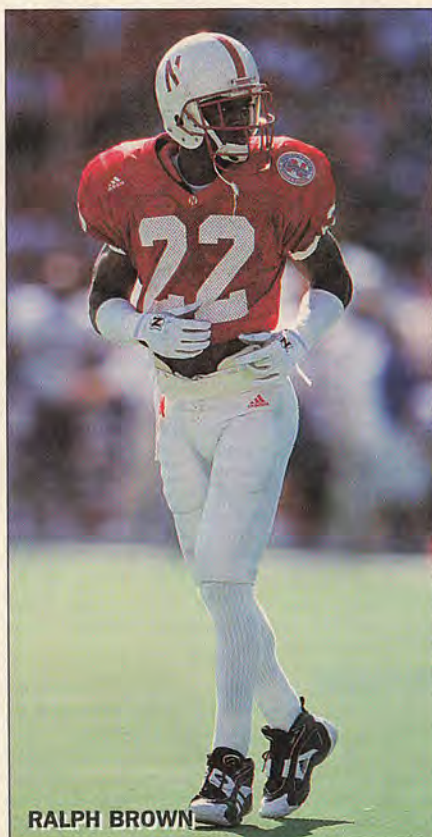
The Nebraska linebackers, headlined by Eric Johnson and Tony Ortiz, should also be extremely productive. Johnson is especially destructive, recording six sacks and 11 tackles for losses in 1999.

Special Teams The Huskers must replace last year's combination of kicker Kris Brown, who holds nearly every NU placekicking record, and Bill Lafleur, who set the NU season punting average record last year. With Brown and Lafleur gone, Dan Hadenfeldt is the only returning letterman and will contend for both kicking spots. In the end, don't be surprised if Hadenfeldt is the punter and redshirt freshman Josh Brown ends up handling the placekicking duties.

The good news is that Joe Walker, who tied an NCAA record last year by returning a punt, a kickoff and interception for touchdowns, is back to handle the return duties.

New Ones to Know Despite some perceived chinks in the armor, perhaps the only newcomer with a chance to make an immediate impact is junior college transfer Larry Henderson. At West Los Angeles Community College last year, the 24-year-old wide receiver caught 30 passes (18.0 yards per catch) and returned kickoffs and punts.

Schedule The Huskers should be 6-0 by Oct. 9, when they receive an extra week to prepare for a road trip to Austin to face Texas. Nebraska will be looking to settle a couple of scores with the Horns, who are 2-0 against Big Red since the formation of the Big 12. NU also has a chance to avenge 1998 losses to Texas A&M and Kansas State, with both teams coming to Lincoln in November.



RALPH BROWN

PROJECTED RECORD: 11-1

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Lincoln, NE
ENROLLMENT: 25,000
STADIUM: Memorial Stadium (72,700)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 9-4
COACH: Frank Solich
CAREER: 9-4; **HERE:** 9-4
BOWL: Lost Holiday (23-20 to Arizona)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 58

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Bobby Newcombe*	6-0	195	Jr.
IB	DeAngelo Evans*	5-9	215	Jr.
FB	Willie Miller	6-1	240	Jr.
WB	Frankie London	5-11	170	Sr.
SE	Matt Davison*	6-1	180	Jr.
TE	T.J. DeBates	6-3	250	Sr.
LT	Adam Julch*	6-5	315	Sr.
LG	James Sherman*	6-4	295	Sr.
C	Dominic Raiola	6-2	295	So.
RG	Russ Hochstein*	6-3	280	Jr.
RT	Jason Schwab*	6-1	300	Sr.
K	Josh Brown	6-2	185	Fr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Aaron Wills	6-2	250	Sr.
DT	Steve Warren*	6-2	315	Sr.
DT	Loran Kaiser*	6-4	290	Jr.
DE	Kyle Vanden Bosch	6-4	270	Jr.
LB	Tony Ortiz*	6-1	220	Sr.
LB	Carlos Polk	6-2	250	Jr.
LB	Eric Johnson*	6-1	205	Sr.
CB	Erwin Swiney*	6-0	185	Jr.
CB	Ralph Brown*	5-10	180	Sr.
FS	Clint Finley*	6-0	205	Jr.
SS	Mike Brown*	5-10	205	Sr.
K	Dan Hadenfeldt	5-11	195	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Correll Buckhalter		799	5.6	8	
Eric Crouch		459	4.8	5	
Dan Alexander		369	5.3	4	
Bobby Newcombe		228	2.7	8	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Bobby Newcombe		712	63.3	1	1
Eric Crouch		601	48.5	4	4
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Matt Davison		32	394	12.3	0
Correll Buckhalter		13	88	6.8	0
KICKING					
None					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Mike Brown		102	5 for loss		
Erwin Swiney		61	13 PBU		
Joe Walker		50	5 for loss		
Tony Ortiz		46	9 for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Iowa	—
Sept. 11	California	W, 24-3
Sept. 18	Southern Miss	—
Sept. 25	at Missouri	W, 20-13
Oct. 2	Oklahoma State	W, 24-17
Oct. 9	Iowa State	W, 42-7
Oct. 23	at Texas	L, 16-20
Oct. 30	at Kansas	W, 41-0
Nov. 6	Texas A&M	L, 21-28
Nov. 13	Kansas State	L, 30-40
Nov. 26	at Colorado	W, 16-14

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	NU	OPP
Rushing yards per game	253.8	116.8
Yards per rush	4.8	3.0
Passing yards per game	131.8	196.8
Completion percentage	56.7	50.1
Net yards per game	384.9	313.7
Points per game	31.9	15.2
Turnovers gained	27	18

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Manhattan, KS
ENROLLMENT: 20,446
STADIUM: KSU/Wagner Field (42,000)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 11-2
COACH: Bill Snyder
CAREER: 77-39-1; **HERE:** 77-39-1
BOWL: Lost Alamo (37-34 to Purdue)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 37

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Michael Beasley	6-1	220	Jr.
TB	David Allen	5-9	195	Jr.
FB	Johnno Lazetich	6-1	245	Jr.
WR	Aaron Lockett*	5-7	155	So.
WR	Brandon Clark	6-3	220	So.
TE	Shad Meier	6-5	245	Jr.
LT	Millford Stephenson*	6-2	275	Jr.
LG	Ian Moses	6-4	285	Sr.
C	Randall Cummins*	6-3	285	Jr.
RG	Andy Eby	6-3	280	So.
RT	Thomas Barnett	6-5	290	So.
K	Jamie Rheem	6-1	190	Jr.

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Monty Beisel	6-3	255	Jr.
DT	DeVane Robinson*	6-1	270	So.
DT	Damion McIntosh*	6-4	290	Sr.
DE	Darren Howard*	6-4	270	Sr.
LB	Travis Litton	6-2	240	Sr.
LB	Ben Leber	6-3	250	So.
LB	Mark Simoneau*	6-0	240	Sr.
CB	Jerametrius Butler	5-10	175	So.
CB	Dyshod Carter*	5-10	185	Jr.
SS	Jarrod Cooper*	6-1	205	Jr.
FS	Lamar Chapman*	6-0	180	Sr.
P	Travis Brown	6-5	230	Fr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Frank Murphy		257	4.7	5	
David Allen		177	5.7	1	
Adam Helm		50	2.0	3	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Adam Helm		188	73.7	0	1
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Aaron Lockett		44	928	21.1	6
Frank Murphy		3	91	30.3	1
KICKING		None			
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Mark Simoneau		95	9 for loss		
Jarrod Cooper		86	8 PBU, 1 INT		
Lamar Chapman		67	3 PBU, 1 INT		
Darren Howard		51	17 for loss, 10.5 sacks		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 11	Temple	—
Sept. 18	Texas-El Paso	—
Sept. 25	at Iowa State	W, 52-7
Oct. 2	at Texas	W, 48-7
Oct. 9	Kansas	W, 54-6
Oct. 16	Utah State	—
Oct. 23	at Oklahoma State	W, 52-20
Oct. 30	Baylor	W, 49-6
Nov. 6	Colorado	W, 16-9
Nov. 13	at Nebraska	W, 40-30
Nov. 20	Missouri	W, 31-25

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	KSU	OPP
Rushing yards per game	224.9	98.3
Yards per rush	4.7	2.7
Passing yards per game	253.5	170.1
Completion percentage	56.6	43.3
Net yards per game	478.4	268.3
Points per game	48.0	13.3
Turnovers gained	33	19

KANSAS STATE

WILDCATS

There's a perception among some college football analysts—and many Kansas State critics—that the Wildcats are bound for a major nosedive in 1999. The belief is based on several points, including the huge personnel losses K-State endured in the offseason, the amount of changes to Bill Snyder's coaching staff and the lingering psychological residue of the Wildcats' disastrous loss to Texas A&M in the 1998 Big 12 championship game.

Once the laughingstock of the college football universe, K-State appeared to have the national championship within reach on Dec. 5, as the 11-0 and top-ranked (in the coaches' poll) Wildcats built a commanding 27-12 fourth-quarter lead. Then came the devastating collapse, or the dramatic comeback, depending on your perspective. A&M rallied for an improbable 36-33, double-overtime win, forever ruining the most sensational season in KSU history. The Wildcats could not recover in a month's time, giving an uninspired effort in a 37-34 loss to Purdue in the Alamo Bowl.

One popular theory regarding the '99 Wildcats (who lost eight offensive starters, including all-everything quarterback Michael Bishop) is that they will continue to slide completely off the map of college football's elite neighborhood. A case can be made for that belief, but don't buy into it. While the Wildcats will certainly be less talented and far less potent than in '98, a truckload of talented performers—especially on defense—will prevent K-State from returning to the NCAA abyss. The Wildcats, who have produced six consecutive seasons of nine wins or more, probably won't be back in the hunt for a national title anytime soon. But as long as they can block out the agonizing memories of the Aggies' miraculous comeback, the Cats can still contend for the Big 12 crown.

Offense

First the good news: Speedy wide receiver Aaron Lockett returns following an outstanding freshman season in 1998. And with dangerous David Allen, a first-team All-America punt returner last year, and senior speedster Frank Murphy listed as 1-2 in the depth chart at tailback, K-State's running attack may have even more punch in 1999 than it did last year.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, the discouraging offensive news could fill the Sunday sports section of a major daily newspaper. The most monumental loss is Bishop, who produced 3,592 yards of total offense in '98 and helped KSU average an amazing 48 points a game. The most likely candidate to fill the void at quarterback is junior Michael Beasley, a talented prospect who is no pawn, but is also not a Bishop. K-State also suffered some heavy losses—literally and figuratively—along the offensive front, where left tackle Millford Stephenson and center Randall Cummins return, but All-American Ryan Young (a seventh-round draft pick of the New York Jets last April) and two other starters do not. One of those holes will be plugged by super sophomore Thomas Barnett (6-5, 290), who started six games at right tackle in 1998.

Finally, the Wildcats' receiving targets, aside from Lockett, are basically unknown outside of Manhattan now that Darnell McDonald (a seventh-round pick of the Tampa Bay Bucs this past spring) and tight end Justin Swift have moved on.

Defense

It's a given that K-State won't score points like it did in 1998. But much like 1998, when K-State ranked third nationally in total defense, the Wildcats should be very stingy on defense. In defensive end Darren Howard and linebacker Mark Simoneau, Kansas State has two legitimate candidates for Defensive Player of the Year in the Big 12 as well as for All-America honors. And defensive tackle Damion McIntosh, along with defensive backs Jarrod Cooper and Lamar Chapman, could easily end up on various all-conference teams by season's end.

Cornerbacks Dyshod Carter and Jerametrius Butler are also solid, proven performers.

The defensive questions are actually very few. A slight dropoff in the overall productiveness of the corps of linebackers can be expected because of the loss of Travis Ochs and Jeff Kelly (a sixth round pick of Atlanta), but with Simoneau as an anchor it shouldn't be major. And up front, Monty Beisel and DeVane Robinson are solid performers next to McIntosh and Howard.

Special Teams

Allen is the most exciting and dangerous return specialist in the country. Allen enters this season needing 562 yards to surpass former Vanderbilt player Lee Nalley as the NCAA's all-time career punt return leader. Nalley piled up 1,695 yards in punt returns from 1947-49.

But with the loss of All-American placekicker Martin Gramatica to the NFL ranks and proven punter James Garcia, special teams are a major area of concern. Junior Jamie Rheem will handle kicking duties, while freshman Travis Brown will be the punter. You might recall that Rheem stepped in as a true freshman for Gramatica after the KSU kicking star suffered a knee injury back in 1996 and made five of eight FGs as well as all 43 of PATs that season.

New Ones to Know

As he's done so successfully in the past, Snyder turned to junior colleges last February for immediate help. The Wildcats signed eight junior college transfers, and any one of them—or all of them, for that matter—could provide immediate help.

Schedule

As usual, the Wildcats will beef up on lightweights in the non-conference schedule, playing host to Temple, UTEP and Utah State. But K-State will be seriously tested in Big 12 play, facing contenders Texas, Oklahoma State and Nebraska on the road.



AARON LOCKETT

PROJECTED RECORD: 9-2

COLORADO

BUFFALOES

Colorado's theme for its first season under coach Gary Barnett is "Return to Dominance." But many CU fans would probably settle—this year, at least—for a return to Top 25 finishes. During the disastrous 5-6 season in 1997, the Buffs dropped out of the national polls for the first time in 143 weeks. And CU, which climbed as high as No. 14 early last year, finished just outside the Top 25 for the second consecutive season.

For a fan base that grew accustomed to annual Top 10 finishes and competing for national titles throughout much of the '90s, the combined 13-10 record over the last two seasons is unsatisfactory. But in Barnett, who was a CU assistant under Bill McCartney from 1984-91, the Buffs have a link to their glorious past. And with the return of 16 starters and 11 others with significant starting experience, Colorado appears to have the manpower—and the right man in charge—to be a Big 12 contender and a Top 25 mainstay this fall. "The primary goal of the program is to start that return (to dominance) immediately," Barnett said.

Colorado will be better under Barnett, but it may be too soon, and there appears to be too many questions, to assume the 1999 Buffs can return to the elite national level they once called home. A return to prominence is likely, but dominance may be a stretch.

Offense A predominately ineffective running game was the primary reason the Buffs were held to their lowest average offensive production (325.5 yards per game) since 1986.

"In looking at last year's statistics, it's obvious that we need to improve the rushing game," Barnett said. "We're not going to leave practice that day unless we're better than we were the day before." Senior tailback Dwayne Cherrington is the most likely candidate to benefit from Barnett's increased emphasis on running the ball, but junior Damion Barton and sophomore Cortlen Johnson are also in the picture. Whoever emerges from that group will be aided by an offensive line, headlined by All-American candidate Ryan Johanningmeier, that returns intact.

Senior quarterback Mike Moschetti, who battled injuries throughout 1998, received some criticism in his first year as a starter. Still, Moschetti finished strong, passing for 2,104 yards and 15 touchdowns and being selected as the Big 12's Offensive Newcomer of the Year. Moschetti was also the MVP in the Buffaloes' Aloha Bowl victory, passing for 213 yards and an Aloha Bowl-record four touchdowns.

A trio of talented receivers—Marcus Stiggers, Javon Green and Cedric Cormier—should help the Buffs stretch opposing defenses. Green, in particular, bears watching

especially after he started to emerge as Moschetti's go-to guy over the course of the last five games of the season. But the key to offensive success in 1999 is improving the lethargic running game.

Defense Colorado had the nation's 13th-best defense in 1998, including the fourth-rated pass defense in the country. With the return of stellar cornerbacks Damen Wheeler and Ben Kelly, the Buffs could once again be difficult to pass against. The biggest problem for Colorado last year was stopping the run, which remains a concern. CU is changing its base alignment from a 4-3 to a 3-4, which means talented defensive end Fred Jones (6 sacks) will be featured in more of a stand-up role in 1999.

Colorado's inside linebackers, Ty Gregorak and Jashon Sykes, are young but impressive. Of the two, Gregorak (55 tackles) looks a future star—a guy capable of being the next great Colorado middle linebacker (following in the footsteps of Greg Biekert, Chad Brown, Ted Johnson and Matt Russell). And senior tackle Jesse Warren is emerging as the leader of a solid defensive front. Warren had 25 tackles in his last four games and won the team's Most Improved Defensive Player award. "Defensively, we will build on the pressure package that was in place here," Barnett said. "But we'll add a few wrinkles that may fit the running games that we'll see in the Big 12."

Special Teams Placekicker Jeremy Aldrich is solid and has good range. Kelly is a game-breaking return specialist, who helped the Buffs finish third nationally in punt returns. But Colorado's punt coverage teams ranked just 57th nationally, although Nick Pietsch is a decent punter (41.5 average).

New Ones to Know Redshirt freshman Brandon Drumm was the only full-time fullback available this past spring and impressed coaches. If Moschetti is injured, a pair of redshirt freshmen, Taylor Barton and Zac Colvin, could press Adam Bledsoe (yes, he's Drew's younger brother) for playing time at quarterback.

Schedule While the Buffs face five opponents who made bowl appearances in 1998, most Colorado fans are focused on an opponent (Washington, 6-6 last season) that didn't even produce a winning record last year. The Buffs will be sky high for the Huskies on Sept. 25 because the new Washington coach happens to be former CU coach Rick Neuheisel, who jumped ship in the midst of recruiting season last winter.

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-3

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Boulder, CO
ENROLLMENT: 24,622
STADIUM: Folsom Field (51,808)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 8-4
COACH: Gary Barnett
CAREER: 43-56-2; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: Won Aloha (51-43 over Oregon)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 57

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Mike Moschetti*	6-0	195	Sr.
TB	Dwayne Cherrington	5-10	195	Sr.
FB	Brandon Drumm	6-2	215	Fr.
WR	Marcus Stiggers*	5-7	180	Sr.
WR	Javon Green*	6-2	195	Jr.
TE	Miles Koon	6-5	265	So.
RT	Victor Rogers*	6-7	315	So.
RG	Ryan Johanningmeier*	6-7	310	Sr.
C	Andre Gurode*	6-4	310	So.
LG	Brad Bedell*	6-5	310	Sr.
LT	Shane Cook*	6-7	310	Sr.
K	Jeremy Aldrich*	5-11	170	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DL	Jesse Warren*	6-4	275	Sr.
DL	Justin Bannan*	6-3	300	So.
DL	Brady McDonnell	6-4	265	Jr.
LB	Fred Jones*	6-3	245	Sr.
LB	Ty Gregorak*	6-3	240	Jr.
LB	Jashon Sykes*	6-3	225	So.
LB	Robert Haas	6-5	245	So.
CB	Damen Wheeler*	5-10	175	Sr.
CB	Ben Kelly*	5-10	185	Jr.
SS	Michael Lewis	6-2	200	So.
FS	Rashidi Barnes	6-0	190	Sr.
P	Nick Pietsch*	6-0	195	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Dwayne Cherrington		350	3.4	2	
Damion Barton		195	3.2	1	
Cortlen Johnson		175	4.4	0	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Mike Moschetti		2,104	58.7	15	7
Adam Bledsoe		109	34.6	0	1
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Javon Green		39	539	13.8	4
Marcus Stiggers		17	242	14.2	2
Cedric Cormier		7	131	18.7	0
KICKING					
Jeremy Aldrich, 16-of-22 FG (46 long), 22-of-26 PAT					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Ty Gregorak		55	6 for loss		
Fred Jones		54	6 sacks		
Ben Kelly		54	22 PBU		
Jashon Sykes		52	4 for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Colorado State	W, 42-14
Sept. 11	San Jose State	—
Sept. 18	Kansas	L, 17-33
Sept. 25	at Washington	—
Oct. 9	Missouri	L, 14-38
Oct. 16	at Texas Tech	W, 19-17
Oct. 23	at Iowa State	W, 37-8
Oct. 30	Oklahoma	W, 27-25
Nov. 6	at Kansas State	L, 9-16
Nov. 13	at Baylor	W, 18-16
Nov. 26	Nebraska	L, 14-16

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	CU	OPP
Rushing yards per game	123.2	147.5
Yards per rush	3.0	3.6
Passing yards per game	202.4	148.5
Completion percentage	56.5	47.6
Net yards per game	325.5	296.0
Points per game	22.8	19.1
Turnovers gained	22	21



DAMEN WHEELER

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Columbia, MO
ENROLLMENT: 22,500
STADIUM: Faurot Field (62,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 8-4
COACH: Larry Smith
CAREER: 136-111-7; **HERE:** 26-31-1
BOWL: Won Insight.com (34-31 over West Virginia)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 44

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Ryan Douglass	6-2	205	Jr.
TB	DeVaughn Black	5-11	203	Sr.
FB	Rob West*	6-0	240	Sr.
WR	John Dausman*	6-1	184	Jr.
WR	Kent Layman*	5-11	187	Sr.
TE	Dwayne Blakley	6-4	256	So.
LT	Aaron Crittendon	6-5	280	So.
LG	Jeff Hellerstedt*	6-4	300	So.
C	Rob Riti*	6-3	285	Sr.
RG	drian Cole	6-4	306	So.
RT	Justin Bland	6-6	316	So.
K	Brian Long	5-11	203	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DL	Pat Mingucci	6-2	266	Sr.
DL	Jeff Marriott*	6-5	288	Sr.
DL	Steve Erickson*	6-4	280	Jr.
DL	Justin Smith*	6-5	267	So.
LB	Pat Duffy	6-1	236	So.
LB	Barry Odom*	6-0	219	Sr.
LB	Jamonte Robinson	6-2	210	So.
CB	Carlos Posey*	6-0	202	Sr.
CB	Antoine Duncan	5-10	190	Fr.
FS	Julian Jones	5-11	189	Jr.
SS	Clarence Jones	6-1	180	So.
P	Vince Sebo*	6-1	228	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Rob West	165	5.2	0
DeVaughn Black	115	4.8	0
Zain Gilmore	64	3.8	0

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Jim Dougherty	17	50.0	0	0

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Kent Layman	26	495	19.0	2
John Dausman	18	364	20.2	3
Kareem Wise	9	143	15.8	1
Rob West	7	58	8.3	0

KICKING	
Brian Long, 3-of-4 FG, 36 long, 13-of-15 PAT	
Tim Geiger, 1-of-2 FG, 27 long, 20-of-22 PAT	

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Jamonte Robinson	66	3 sacks
Justin Smith	63	11 for loss
Barry Odom	54	6 for loss
Carlos Posey	48	6 PBU
Tony Okanlawon	39	3 PBU

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Ala.-Birmingham	—
Sept. 18	Western Michigan	—
Sept. 25	Nebraska	L, 13-20
Oct. 2	at Memphis	—
Oct. 9	at Colorado	W, 38-14
Oct. 16	Iowa State	W, 35-19
Oct. 23	at Kansas	W, 41-23
Oct. 30	Texas Tech	W, 28-16
Nov. 6	at Oklahoma	W, 20-6
Nov. 13	Texas A&M	L, 14-17
Nov. 20	at Kansas State	L, 25-31

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	MU	OPP
Rushing yards per game	232.0	160.1
Yards per rush	4.7	3.9
Passing yards per game	118.0	153.3
Completion percentage	47.1	57.4
Net yards per game	350.0	313.4
Points per game	27.3	18.6
Turnovers gained	25	18

MISSOURI TIGERS

A glance at the 1999 Missouri depth chart reveals the familiar names of Jones and West in the projected starting lineup. Unfortunately for Mizzou, it is not the same Jones or West who became household names in Missouri and helped head coach Larry Smith resurrect a program that went from 1984-96 without producing a winning season.

The exciting, record-setting combination of quarterback Corby Jones and tailback Devin West led the Tigers to back-to-back bowl games in 1997 and '98. But those two headliners, as well as three key members of an impressive secondary, are now gone. And with such major losses in both the offensive and defensive backfields, it's debatable whether the Tigers can be back in contention for a bowl berth in 1999.

Smith's cupboard isn't completely bare, as 11 starters return from the 1998 Insight.com Bowl champions. But in addition to the aforementioned losses, several key offensive linemen have also departed, leaving Smith with more questions than an inquisitive 3-year-old. The nonconference schedule is conducive for a quick start. But the Tigers will be hard-pressed to match their recent success and are more likely to hover around the .500 level.

Offense Jones and West combined to produce 3,395 yards of total offense last year. Their most likely replacements this season, junior Ryan Douglass at quarterback and senior DeVaughn Black at tailback, produced a combined total of 161 yards last year. Douglass has played in 10 games over the last two seasons, but he has yet to complete a collegiate pass. His career passing statistics are: 0-for-8. Another candidate at quarterback is sophomore Jim Dougherty, who played in one game last year and has one completion to his credit.

The best news in the offensive backfield is that one West, senior fullback Rob West, does return. Rob West, no relation to Devin, is the most experienced and productive returner in the backfield, averaging 5.2 yards per carry last season.

The situation is not significantly better up front, where the Tigers must replace all-conference linemen Todd Neimeyer and Craig Heimburger and dependable performers like tackle Chris Meredith and Jake Stueve, whom Smith called the best blocking tight end he had ever coached. Sensational senior center Rob Riti does return, but some former reserves will need to step up their games in a hurry. Riti, one of the strongest players ever to wear the Black and Gold, will be the leader of the unit, though. He holds the school record with a 1,000-pound squat lift (set during 1999 winter conditioning) and has also bench pressed 400 pounds and power-cleaned 435.

Aside from the strong man Riti, the area of strength on offense appears to be at receiver—an ironic twist since Missouri has been such a run-oriented offense. Sophomore Eric Spencer had an outstanding spring and will join returning starters Kareem Wise, John Dausman and Kent Layman to form one of the better receiving units in the Big 12.

Defense Missouri's secondary may have been second to none last year, but three-quarters of that unit is gone with the departure of Harold Piersey, Wade Perkins and Caldrinoff Easter. Like the offensive line, an all-conference candidate, cornerback Carlos Posey, returns in the defensive backfield. But the underclassmen need to pick it up, because there's no doubt that opponents will test that young secondary early and often.

Senior linebacker Barry Odom is the anchor of the Tigers' front seven, where he is joined by two outstand-

ing sophomores, defensive end Justin Smith and outside linebacker Jamonte Robinson. Both Smith and Robinson received Freshmen All-America honors in 1998. The inside tandem of Jeff Marriott and Steve Erickson also gives Mizzou two proven performers along the defensive front.

Special Teams Without much of a doubt, Missouri had the worst special teams in the Big 12 last year. In particular, the field goal/extra point situation was ridiculous, costing the Tigers a chance to win several times. Smith had so little faith in his field goal unit that the Tigers attempted only seven field goals all year, electing instead to go for it on many fourth-down situations in the red zone. Whether it's Brian Long or Tim Geiger who wins the job in 1999, Missouri must improve in that area to have any hopes of reaching its third straight bowl game. Senior punter Vince Sebo returns after a solid junior season in which he averaged 41.4 yards per punt.

New Ones to Know In the secondary, where the Tigers need significant help, three redshirt freshmen—Antoine Duncan, John McPherson and Neal Colzie Jr.—could provide it. Colzie is the son of former Ohio State All-American and nine-year NFL veteran Neal Colzie Sr.

Schedule Unlike the last two seasons, when Mizzou faced national title contender Ohio State early in the year, the Tigers don't have any heavyweights in non-conference play. Missouri should breeze through non-conference play and most go at least .500 in Big 12 action to become bowl eligible.



JUSTIN SMITH

BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

KANSAS

JAYHAWKS

Since coach Terry Allen's arrival following the 1996 season, Kansas has upgraded its stadium, schedule and, most importantly, its overall talent level. Unfortunately for the Jayhawks, all the improvements probably aren't yet enough to prevent KU from being KO'd by college football's bullies. While the Jayhawks are no longer viewed as lightweights, they're simply not strong enough to consistently trade punches with the list of heavyweights on the 1999 schedule.

Kansas opens at Notre Dame, faces Big 12 North champion Kansas State and league champion Texas A&M in consecutive weeks and plays a total of eight teams who compiled winning records last year. It's an ambitious schedule that would earn KU some serious Bowl Championship Series brownie points. But by the time the Jayhawks get through a mine-filled October, receiving any bowl invitation will no longer be a possibility.

An offense that returns nine players with significant starting experience should make for some entertaining moments in Lawrence. But a defense that ranked last in the Big 12 in scoring and run stopping last year—and one that is missing six starters from that yielding unit—should once again leave Jayhawk fans longing for basketball season to fulfill their post-season fix.

Offense Despite missing the majority of four games last season, senior quarterback Zac Wegner helped the Jayhawks make some significant strides in their passing game. KU, which ranked 103rd nationally in passing offense in 1997, climbed more than 20 spots in the national statistics last year. And with the return of gifted receivers like Harrison Hill, Termaine Fulton and Michael Chandler, the Jayhawks' passing game could be even more effective in '99.

Of course, there's a possibility that Wegner may not be the trigger man of that passing attack. Junior college transfer Dylon Smith, a strong-armed, elusive quarterback, has been favorably compared to former K-State quarterback Michael Bishop. That remains to be seen, but the quarterback position does appear to be a strength. And there's no doubt that running back, where diminutive gamebreaker David Winbush and talented reserve Mitch Bowles return, is a major plus for KU. Winbush needs just 451 yards this season to move into KU's top 10 list for career rushing yards.

The potential offensive problem is up front, where three starters must be replaced. Chuck Jarvis, Bob Smith, Bob Schmidt and Justin Hartwig have some experience, but the line remains a concern. Former JUCO All-American John Odonetto, who spent last season as a redshirt, could see action at several positions up front.

Defense A defense that was often dismal last year loses its top two players from 1998, linebacker Steve Bratten and strong safety Michael Allen. But with the return of all three starting linemen—ends Dion Rayford and Dion Johnson and tackle John Williams—and the addition of some talented newcomers throughout the defense, Terry Allen believes the Jayhawks can do a better job of stopping opponents.

The key to achieving that goal is the play of the linebackers. The unit will receive a major lift from the return of inside linebacker Dariss Lomax, who was academically ineligible in 1998. Junior college transfer Scott Rogers will press veterans Andrew LeClair

and Marcus Rogers for playing time inside, while another junior college transfer, Chaz Murphy, could make an immediate impact on the outside. The secondary isn't exceptional, but cornerbacks Muhammad Abdul-Rahim and Andrew Davison are solid and JUCO transfer Kareem High could ease the pain of Michael Allen's departure at strong safety.

Special Teams Although Bowles and Henri Childs proved to be dangerous kick and punt returners in 1998, for the most part, the Jayhawks' special teams weren't that special. Punter Joey Pelfanio replaces Matt Tyler, who averaged only 37.1 yards last year. Joe Garcia was a decent placekicker, but was somewhat inconsistent from beyond 40 yards.

New Ones to Know Allen is counting on contributions from the seven junior college prospects he signed last February. But the two key players could be quarterback Dylon Smith and safety Kareem High. While Smith could emerge as the starter, he will most likely provide depth behind Wegner. High, on the other hand, could make an immediate impact at strong safety.

Schedule The obvious benefit to playing Notre Dame in the Eddie Robinson Classic is the \$600,000 paycheck the Jayhawks are guaranteed to receive. But Allen also likes the extra week of practice his team will receive. The Jayhawks may not have enough firepower to beat the Irish in South Bend, but the extra week of work and big-game experience could prove to be an invaluable benefit the rest of the season.



ZAC WEGNER

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-7

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Lawrence, KS
ENROLLMENT: 26,297
STADIUM: Memorial Stadium (50,250)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 4-7
COACH: Terry Allen
CAREER: 84-39; **HERE:** 9-13
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 46

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Zac Wegner*	6-2	200	Sr.
HB	David Winbush*	5-7	175	Jr.
FB	Moran Norris*	6-2	245	Jr.
SE	Harrison Hill*	5-11	185	So.
FL	Termaine Fulton*	5-10	188	Jr.
TE	Jason Gully*	6-3	255	Jr.
RT	Justin Hartwig	6-4	290	So.
RG	Jason Stevenson	6-1	285	So.
C	Chris Enneking*	6-4	280	Sr.
LG	Chuck Jarvis	6-6	315	Jr.
LT	Bob Smith	6-4	275	So.
K	Joe Garcia*	6-0	175	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Dion Rayford*	6-3	260	Sr.
NT	John Williams*	6-2	300	Sr.
DE	Dion Johnson*	6-4	290	Sr.
LB	Tim Bowers	6-0	220	Jr.
LB	Andrew LeClair	6-6	235	So.
LB	Dariss Lomax	6-2	230	Jr.
LB	Algie Atkinson	6-5	220	So.
CB	Quincy Roe	5-9	180	So.
CB	Andrew Davison*	5-11	195	So.
SS	Greg Erb	6-0	185	Sr.
FS	Chad Coellner*	6-0	200	Sr.
P	Joey Pelfanio	6-1	205	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
David Winbush	974	4.7	9
Mitch Bowles	438	5.3	4
Jay Alexander	37	1.3	0

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Zac Wegner	1,367	48.9	7	6
Jay Alexander	512	50.0	2	3

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Harrison Hill	28	391	14.0	2
Termaine Fulton	25	503	20.1	3
Michael Chandler	21	236	11.2	1
Byron Gasaway	12	148	12.3	2

KICKING
 Joe Garcia, 12-of-17 FG (47 long), 27-of-29 PAT

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Chad Coellner	68	2 PBU
Dion Rayford	41	10 for loss
John Williams	40	—
Greg Erb	42	1 interception

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 28	at Notre Dame*	—
Sept. 11	Cal State Northridge	—
Sept. 18	at Colorado	W, 33-17
Sept. 25	San Diego State	—
Oct. 2	SMU	—
Oct. 9	at Kansas State	L, 6-54
Oct. 16	at Texas A&M	L, 21-24
Oct. 23	Missouri	L, 23-41
Oct. 30	Nebraska	L, 0-41
Nov. 6	Baylor	L, 24-31
Nov. 13	at Oklahoma State	L, 28-38
Nov. 20	Iowa State	L, 20-23

*Eddie Robinson Classic, South Bend, Indiana

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	KU	OPP
Rushing yards per game	148.9	235.6
Yards per rush	3.8	4.6
Passing yards per game	170.8	151.8
Completion percentage	49.3	51.5
Net yards per game	319.7	387.5
Points per game	25.5	31.0
Turnovers gained	23	25

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Ames, IA
ENROLLMENT: 25,384
STADIUM: Jack Trice Stadium (43,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Dan McCarney
CAREER: 9-35; **HERE:** 9-35
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 44

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Sage Rosenfels	6-4	218	Jr.
TB	Darren Davis*	5-8	190	Sr.
FB	Jerome Heavens	5-9	230	Sr.
FL	Damien Groce*	5-10	182	Sr.
SE	Chris Anthony*	6-3	198	Jr.
TE	Mike Banks	6-4	249	So.
LT	Bill Marsau*	6-5	294	Sr.
LG	Ben Bruns*	6-3	300	Jr.
C	Josh Rank	6-4	280	So.
RG	Ryan Gerke	6-4	300	Sr.
RT	Cory Hannen	6-4	300	Fr.
K	Mike McKnight	6-3	207	So.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Reggie Hayward*	6-5	241	Jr.
DT	James Reed*	6-0	265	Jr.
NG	Ryan Harklau*	6-3	271	Jr.
DE	Kevin DeRonde	6-5	255	So.
LB	Jim Morse	6-1	224	Jr.
LB	Eric Welford	6-0	204	Jr.
LB	Jesse Beckom*	6-0	209	Sr.
CB	Jamaricus Powers*	5-10	180	Jr.
CB	Breon Ansley*	5-6	172	Jr.
SS	Jeff Waters*	6-2	184	Sr.
FS	Dustin Avey*	6-3	210	Jr.
P	Carl Gomez*	6-2	201	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Darren Davis		1,166	4.0	7	
Ennis Haywood		178	5.9	2	
J.J. Moses		80	3.5	0	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Sage Rosenfels		48	33.3	0	1
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Damien Groce		47	640	13.6	7
Chris Anthony		42	490	11.7	2
Darren Davis		29	242	8.3	2
KICKING		None			
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Jeff Waters		93	2 fumble rec.		
James Reed		88	4 sacks		
Jesse Beckom		76	4 for loss		
Reggie Hayward		59	5.5 sacks		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 2	Indiana State	—
Sept. 11	Iowa	W, 27-9
Sept. 18	at UNLV	—
Sept. 25	Kansas State	L, 7-52
Oct. 9	at Nebraska	L, 7-42
Oct. 16	at Missouri	L, 19-35
Oct. 23	Colorado	L, 8-37
Oct. 30	Texas	L, 33-54
Nov. 6	at Texas Tech	L, 24-31
Nov. 13	Oklahoma	L, 14-17
Nov. 20	at Kansas	W, 23-20

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	ISU	OPP
Rushing yards per game	130.2	228.3
Yards per rush	3.6	4.8
Passing yards per game	206.8	180.3
Completion percentage	50.1	54.5
Net yards per game	337.0	408.5
Points per game	20.1	29.8
Turnovers gained	16	25

IOWA STATE

CYCLONES

After three weeks of the 1998 season, the Iowa State Cyclones were 2-1 and recognized as the undisputed state champions, the result of an impressive 27-9 victory over Iowa. Unfortunately for the Cyclones, eight more remained to be played. It would have been much better if they could have quit while they were ahead.

The rest of year followed a familiar, frustrating pattern for ISU fans. There were some close calls, a handful of blowout losses and a lone conference win. The end result was yet another losing season. The Cyclones still haven't won more than four games in a season since 1989. Unfortunately for the likable and personable Dan McCarney, there's little reason to believe Iowa State will end that streak of futility in 1999.

While the Cyclones have been rather dismal defensively in recent years (finishing 85th nationally or lower in every major defensive statistical category the last two seasons), ISU was often entertaining on offense. Last year, for example, the Cyclones finished third in the Big 12 in passing offense behind quarterback Todd Bandhauer (4,720 yards passing the last two years).

But now, Bandhauer is gone, leaving senior tailback Darren Davis as the sole focus of the offense. Davis is good, but he's not good enough to shoulder the burden of a program that can't seem to catch a break and can't attract enough top talent to leave the Big 12 cellar behind.

Offense With Bandhauer's departure, the Cyclones will turn to either Sage Rosenfels or Derrick Walker to assume control of the offense. Rosenfels gained some experience last year, playing in four games. But his statistics (3 of 9 for 49 yards and one interception) weren't encouraging. Walker, a transfer from Blinn Junior College in Brenham, Texas, has 4.5 speed in the 40 and completed 45 of 105 passes for 626 yards and four touchdowns as a JUCO freshman.

If the quarterbacks can get it there, ISU does have some proven receivers in fold. Both Damien Groce and Chris Anthony finished among the Big 12 receiving leaders in 1998, combining to make more than eight catches per game.

Of course, the offensive star is Davis, the younger brother of former Iowa State All-American Troy Davis. The younger Davis rushed for 1,166 yards last season (fourth in the Big 12 and 22nd nationally). "We're very excited about having Darren back for his senior season," McCarney said. "We think he has the capabilities to accomplish some special things this year."

Another positive for the Cyclones is the return of junior fullback Jerome Heavens, who rushed for 94 yards and one TD in 1997 while making 11 receptions for 68 yards. Heavens attended Los Angeles Southwest (Calif.) Community College to regain his athletic eligibility. Iowa State welcomes back three players with at least some starting experience in the offensive line, but the Cyclones still can't match up with the Big 12's best along the front.

Defense While the Cyclones continued to struggle on defense in 1998, they did show some signs of improvement. And the return of eight defensive starters gives McCarney reason to believe ISU

can continue to work its way up the national rankings and, more importantly, do a better job of keeping opponents out of the end zone. In losses to nationally ranked Texas, Missouri, Kansas State and Nebraska, the Cyclones gave up an average of 45.75 points per game.

The Cyclones were particularly yielding against the run, surrendering 221 yards per game (103rd nationally). But with the return of three defensive line starters—Reggie Hayward, James Reed and Ben Bruns—ISU's rush defense could be improved. The leaders of an improving secondary are strong safety Jeff Waters and free safety Dustin Avey. Waters led the team with 93 tackles a year ago and Avey added 52.

Special Teams The Cyclones will be forced to find a new placekicker, but junior punter Carl Gomez has proven to be one of the league's best. A year ago, Gomez averaged right at 40 yards per punt, quite an accomplishment considering the often difficult weather conditions in Ames.

New One to Know While receiver already appears to be an area of strength, junior college transfer Craig Campbell (Mt. San Antonio Calif. College) could provide an immediate impact. Campbell had 35 receptions for 500 yards and six touchdowns in his first season of junior college ball.

Schedule ISU could have a quick start, facing Indiana State and UNLV in the season's first three weeks. But bet the house that Iowa will be looking to avenge last year's loss to the Cyclones on Sept. 11.



PROJECTED RECORD: 2-9

TEXAS A&M

AGGIES

Texas A&M University is rooted in a rich military tradition. So, perhaps it shouldn't come as a surprise that the Aggie football players sound much like military recruiters when, in summarizing their goals for the 1999 season, they simply say: "Aim high."

"Last year, we didn't set our goals as high as what we actually accomplished," senior tailback Dante Hall said. "Our goal last year was to return to the Big 12 championship game. It really wasn't even to win it. But we ended up winning it and going to the Sugar Bowl. I think if we set our goal this year to get back to the Sugar Bowl, where the national championship game is going to be played, we can make it."

With 18 returning starters, the Aggies appear to have all the makings of a team that can contend for the conference title. And because of A&M's recent experience in big games, the Aggie players say they are thinking of bigger things than just the Big 12 title.

"We beat the No. 1 team in the nation (Kansas State) and the No. 2 team in the nation (Nebraska) and probably could have beaten two other top national teams (Florida State and Ohio State) last year," senior cornerback Sedrick Curry said. "We have to stay focused every week and take care of our business every time out. But we all know we can compete with and beat the top teams in the nation. Why shouldn't we set goals on playing for the national title?"

Offense To reach to the next level, the Aggies must get their offense out of the bottom quarter of the national rankings. When A&M fans say they want a '90s style of offense, finishing 91st nationally in total production isn't what they meant.

The key to improved offensive productivity may hinge on senior quarterback Randy McCown's health and his ability to get the ball into the hands of an outstanding collection of skill players. McCown is a solid, no-frills quarterback, but his hard-nosed style has made him susceptible to injuries. And unlike last year, the Aggies do not have a proven backup quarterback.

If he can stay healthy, McCown has plenty of weapons at his disposal. The offensive line, with three returning starters, appears to be strong. But the strength of the offense is at running back and wide receiver. Hall, who returns following a 1,000-yard season last year, is one of the better tailbacks in the Big 12. Ja'Mar Toombs, a massive, 260-pound sophomore, may be the league's best full-

back. And the A&M receiving corps, which features a three-deep collection of gamebreakers, is surely the best overall receiving unit in the conference.

Defense The leading tackler in Texas A&M history, Lombardi Award winner Dat Nguyen, is gone. Nguyen's influence on the Aggie defense, however, is still present. "I think we all learned a lot from Dat Nguyen last year," said junior all-conference linebacker candidate Cornelius Anthony. "He taught us about heart, hustle and never giving up. And even though he's gone, we're committed to carrying on his style of play."

The Aggies have plenty of athletes capable of making the "Wrecking Crew" defense as destructive as ever. The defensive front, which returns all three starters and all three top backups from 1998, is a bit undersized, but is extremely quick. The secondary features three returning starters, including All-Big 12 candidates in cornerback Jason Webster and safety Brandon Jennings.

And even with the loss of Nguyen and Warrick Holdman, the linebackers are extremely impressive. Anthony and Roylin Bradley could be on the verge of being the next stars in A&M's assembly line of outstanding linebackers.

Special Teams Senior punter Shane Lechler is a definite All-American candidate after averaging 43.6 yards per punt in '98 and 47.0 in 1997. Kicker Russell Bynum isn't long on leg strength, but he was accurate last year, hitting 16 of 20 field goal attempts.

New One to Know A partial qualifier last year, wide receiver Bethel Johnson is eligible to play in 1999. And based on his work in practice, A&M head coach R.C. Slocum says the speedy Johnson has the ability to become one of the best receivers and return men in A&M history.

Schedule The Aggies should breeze through a mild nonconference schedule and could easily be 8-0 and ranked in the Top 5 when they travel to Lincoln, Neb. to face the Cornhuskers on Nov. 6. That game should determine whether the Aggies' national title hopes are realistic or far-fetched. It could also be a preview of the Big 12 championship game in San Antonio.

PROJECTED RECORD: 11-1

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: College Station, TX
ENROLLMENT: 43,000
STADIUM: Kyle Field (80,500)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 11-3
COACH: R.C. Slocum
CAREER: 94-28-2; **HERE:** 94-28-2
BOWL: Lost Sugar (24-14 to Ohio State)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 44

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Randy McCown*	6-1	210	Sr.
TB	Dante Hall*	5-8	190	Sr.
FB	Ja'Mar Toombs*	6-1	260	So.
WR	Chris Cole*	6-0	186	Sr.
WR	Leroy Hodge*	6-2	204	Sr.
TE	RoDerrick Broughton	6-2	266	Jr.
RT	Andy Vincent*	6-3	301	Sr.
RG	Semisi Heimuli*	6-2	303	Sr.
C	Seth McKinney*	6-3	293	So.
LG	Chris Valetta	6-2	306	Jr.
LT	Tango McCauley	6-4	290	So.
K	Russell Bynum*	5-9	176	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Rocky Bernard*	6-3	269	Jr.
NG	Ron Edwards*	6-3	262	Jr.
DE	Ronald Flemmons*	6-5	247	Jr.
LB	Jason Glenn	6-0	220	Jr.
LB	Cornelius Anthony*	6-0	224	Jr.
LB	Chad Frantzen	6-2	210	Jr.
LB	Roylin Bradley*	6-1	221	Jr.
CB	Jason Webster*	5-10	178	Sr.
CB	Sedrick Curry*	6-2	192	Sr.
FS	Brandon Jennings*	6-1	191	Sr.
SS	Michael Jameson	5-10	179	Jr.
P	Shane Lechler*	6-2	215	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Dante Hall	1,024	4.2	8	
Ja'Mar Toombs	422	4.9	3	
Randy McCown	139	1.5	3	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Randy McCown	1,025	50.8	6	3
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Chris Cole	38	667	17.6	5
Chris Taylor	15	306	20.4	2
Leroy Hodge	15	214	14.3	1
Matt Bumgardner	9	173	19.2	1
KICKING				
Russell Bynum, 16-of-20 FG (43 long), 30-of-31 PAT				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Cornelius Anthony	100	13 for loss		
Brandon Jennings	84	4 interceptions		
Roylin Bradley	81	9 sacks		
Jason Webster	72	7 PBU		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at La. Tech (Shreveport, La.)	W, 28-7
Sept. 18	Tulsa	—
Sept. 25	Southern Mississippi	W, 24-6
Oct. 2	at Texas Tech	W, 17-10
Oct. 9	Baylor	W, 35-14
Oct. 16	Kansas	W, 24-21
Oct. 23	at Oklahoma	W, 29-0
Oct. 30	Oklahoma State	W, 17-6
Nov. 6	at Nebraska	W, 28-21
Nov. 13	at Missouri	W, 17-14
Nov. 26	Texas	L, 24-26

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	A&M	OPP
Rushing yards per game	152.7	121.7
Yards per rush	3.3	3.2
Passing yards per game	159.3	167.6
Completion percentage	52.3	55.6
Net yards per game	312.0	289.3
Points per game	24.7	14.6
Turnovers gained	31	15



DANTE HALL

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Austin, TX
ENROLLMENT: 48,886
STADIUM: Darrell K. Royal-Memorial Stadium (80,216)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 9-3
COACH: Mack Brown
CAREER: 95-77-1; **HERE:** 9-3
BOWL: Won Cotton (38-11 over Mississippi State)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

TEXAS

LONGHORNS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Major Applewhite*	6-1	195	So.
TB	Hodges Mitchell	5-7	190	Jr.
FB	Ricky Brown*	6-0	220	Sr.
WR	Ryan Nunez	5-9	174	Sr.
WR	Kwame Cavil*	6-2	200	Jr.
TE	Mike Jones	6-4	245	So.
RT	Cory Quye	6-6	315	Jr.
RG	Antwan Kirk-Hughes	6-3	320	So.
C	Marcel Blanchard	6-4	300	Jr.
LG	Roger Roesler*	6-5	300	Sr.
LT	Leonard Davis	6-6	350	Jr.
K	Kris Stockton*	5-9	185	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Aaron Humphrey*	6-3	255	Sr.
LT	Casey Hampton*	6-1	300	Jr.
RT	Cedric Woodard*	6-3	280	Sr.
DE	J.J. Kelly	6-3	237	Jr.
LB	Marcus Wilkins	6-2	215	So.
LB	De'Andre Lewis*	6-1	225	So.
LB	Everick Rawls	6-1	216	So.
CB	Ervis Hill	5-9	178	So.
CB	Joe Walker*	6-0	175	Jr.
FS	Quentin Jammer*	6-1	180	Jr.
SS	Donald McCowen*	6-0	205	Jr.
P	Ryan Long*	6-1	190	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Hodges Mitchell	111	4.8	2	
Ricky Brown	55	5.5	1	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Major Applewhite	2,453	58.2	18	11
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Kwame Cavil	51	775	15.2	3
Ryan Nunez	18	171	9.5	0
KICKING				
Kris Stockton, 16-of-21 FG (53 long), 46-of-46 PAT				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Quentin Jammer	81	10 PBU		
De'Andre Lewis	77	2 fumbles forced		
Aaron Humphrey	74	10 sacks		
Casey Hampton	60	8 for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 28	North Carolina State	—
Sept. 4	Stanford	—
Sept. 11	at Rutgers	—
Sept. 18	Rice	W, 59-21
Sept. 25	at Baylor	W, 30-20
Oct. 2	Kansas State	L, 7-48
Oct. 9	Oklahoma (Dallas)	W, 34-3
Oct. 23	Nebraska	W, 20-16
Oct. 30	at Iowa State	W, 54-33
Nov. 6	at Oklahoma State	W, 37-34
Nov. 13	Texas Tech	L, 35-42
Nov. 26	at Texas A&M	W, 26-24

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	UT	OPP
Rushing yards per game	204.2	143.5
Yards per rush	5.1	3.4
Passing yards per game	266.5	220.9
Completion percentage	59.1	51.9
Net yards per game	470.6	364.4
Points per game	36.3	29.6
Turnovers gained	21	24

Mack Brown's first season at the University of Texas was a magical one for all Longhorns. But based on the heavy offensive losses the Horns endured in the offseason, Brown will probably need to be a magician to duplicate—or surpass—that level of success in 1999. And even Brown acknowledges that he won't be able to pull a Ricky Williams out from underneath his hat.

Williams, the 1998 Heisman Trophy winner and the leading rusher in NCAA Division I-A history, is gone. So is Wane McGarity, the leading receiver in school history. Gone, too, are four starting offensive linemen and All-Big 12 tight end, Derek Lewis.

"We have a lot of unanswered questions because of youth and lack of experience in key positions," Brown said. "We lost a lot of good players from last year's team—80 percent of our offense was in the hands of Williams and Wane McGarity. But hopefully we can get better each week like we did last year. If we can do that, we hope to be pretty good in December."

By late August, the Longhorns' rapidly improving defense should be pretty good. But an offense with so many new faces—and minus one very unique hairdo—could keep the Horns near the bottom of the Top 25.

Offense While the departure of Williams, McGarity and other stars from 1998 create major concerns, at least the Horns have a "Major" asset at quarterback. Sophomore Major Applewhite returns following a sensational 1998 season in which he passed for 2,453 yards and 18 touchdowns.

"For him to win nine games and accomplish what he did last year as a redshirt freshman was really phenomenal," Brown said of Applewhite. "We feel very good about him."

Brown also feels good about wide receiver Kwame Cavil, who should be Applewhite's favorite target in '99. Cavil caught 51 passes last year and appears to be ready to break out of McGarity's shadows this season.

Unfortunately, the news is not so encouraging elsewhere. Junior Hodges Mitchell (111 rushing yards last year) and redshirt freshman Victor Ike are talented, shifty runners with excellent speed, but the Texas running game won't be the same without Williams.

The offensive front could suffer a dropoff, as well. Only senior left guard Roger Roesler returns for a unit that was a team strength in 1998. Left tackle Leonard Davis and right guard Antwan Kirk-Hughes have big-time potential, but both lack quality game experience.

Defense Defensively, the Longhorns made steady progress throughout last season, and by the end of the year, the Horns were stifling against the run. In a 26-24 win over Texas A&M, for example, the Longhorns held the Aggies to minus-7 yards rushing.

"We're hoping for a lot of carryover from the end of the season," Brown said. "We stopped the run really well last year, but we got burned against the pass, and we were still having some problems in the spring in that area. We've got to improve in our secondary."

Safeties Quentin Jammer and Donald McCowen should help improve the pass defense, but the cornerbacks are still a concern. Joe Walker and Ervis Hill could be pressed by several redshirt and true freshmen from Brown's outstanding 1999 recruiting class.

Along the defensive front, the Horns are very solid, with All-Big 12 candidate Aaron Humphrey at one end and run-stopping specialists Casey Hampton and Cedric Woodard inside. Middle linebacker De'Andre Lewis and outside linebacker Everick Rawls greatly enhance the Horns' athleticism on defense.

Special Teams Junior placekicker Kris Stockton connected on 16 of 21 field goals in 1998 and proved to be dependable under pressure, hitting last-second game winners against Oklahoma State and A&M. Junior Ryan Long averaged 43.5 yards per punt last year. Mitchell, Ike and Montrell Flowers form a solid return trio.

New One to Know Texas received plenty of national attention last February by signing Chris Simms, the *USA Today* Offensive Player of the Year. But the impact player in 1999 from the nation's No. 1 recruiting class could be linebacker Cory Redding, *USA Today's* Defensive Player of the Year. Redding is a tremendous pass rusher off the edge, an outstanding tackler and could find some playing time right away.

Schedule Facing pass-happy North Carolina State and Stanford in the first two games could cause problems for a secondary that was often burned last year. The Longhorns also must face Nebraska and Texas A&M squads that are bent on redemption after Texas beat each of those teams last year. The Horns get the Huskers in Austin, but must face the Aggies in College Station, a place where Texas has won only once since 1983.

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-4

MAJOR APPLEWHITE



TODD WASHAW/ALLSPORT

OKLAHOMA STATE

COWBOYS

Lauded for battling long odds to earn a bowl berth in 1997, Oklahoma State was left out of the bowl picture last year because of too many close calls. The Cowboys lost three Big 12 games in 1998 by a touchdown or less, creating an offseason filled with retrospective thoughts and sleepless nights in Stillwater. On the positive side, however, OSU coach Bob Simmons says those narrow defeats have generated increased focus and added incentive for 1999.

"Having gone to a bowl (in '97) and tasted what it was like and then not going last year, these kids want to go the distance," Simmons says. "That is our theme this year, to finish games. If we can do that, we can be pretty good. I believe we have adequate talent."

At many positions, the Cowboys' talent level is more than adequate. Some outstanding skill personnel on offense and perhaps the best overall group of linebackers in the Big 12 should be enough to lead OSU back to a bowl this holiday season.

But the Cowboys, who return seven of their top 10 tacklers, their top three rushers, top two receivers and top three total offense leaders, must fare better against top-flight competition. OSU faced six nationally-ranked teams during 1998, going 1-5 against those opponents. This year, the Cowboys play six teams that made bowl appearances last season.

Offense OSU enters 1999 with no shortage of offensive firepower. Despite some struggles in '98, elusive quarterback Tony Lindsay passed for 1,442 yards and seven touchdowns and added 592 yards and 10 touchdowns on the ground. When he's on the run and improvising, Lindsay is one of the more dangerous quarterbacks in the country.

He's joined in the backfield by one of the Big 12's best running backs, tailback Nathan Simmons, who combines excellent power and speed. And behind Simmons is Jamaal Fobbs, whose blazing speed and versatility enables OSU to use him at several positions.

Ethan Howell (4.3 speed), Terrance Richardson and Fobbs give OSU some big-play weapons at wide receiver. But perhaps the key to the passing game is the status of sophomore tight end Marcellus Rivers, who was on academic probation and spent the spring at Rose State Junior College attempting to regain his eligibility. With Rivers, who had 22 catches for 335 yards and four touchdowns last year, the OSU offense is loaded. Without him, it's not nearly as potent.

Up front, All-Big 12 guard Adam Davis returns for his senior season as the anchor of the line, while senior center Reynell Lavigne will attempt to fill the shoes of one of the best linemen in the country last year, Jeremy Offutt.

Defense While the Cowboys ranked in the Top 25 last year in rushing defense, their passing defense was far more generous, surrendering more than 210 yards per game. The secondary continues to be a major source of concern, with the loss of two key starters. Along the defensive front, tackles Zak Akin and Cortney Mallory are returning starters and form a strong run-stopping duo in the middle, but the ends are not overly impressive at this point.

Despite the uncertainties in the defensive backfield and line, OSU could be impressive defensively because of its imposing collection of linebackers. Explosive, hard-hitting middle linebacker Kenyatta Wright may be one of the best linebackers in the country and is a leading candidate for Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year. Senior Tarrell Knauls also is an impact linebacker on the outside, along with senior Jack Golden. And with the return of proven performers like Raymond Cato, Dwayne Levels, Troy West and Justin Thomas, the Cowboys have one of the best groups of linebackers in the Big 12.

Special Teams Senior Tim Sydnes is a consistent performer, hitting 15 of 18 field goal attempts last year and leading the Cowboys in scoring (77 points). OSU also has a pair of proven punters in Russ Schwettmann and Scott Elder. Fobbs and Richardson are exciting return specialists.

New One to Know The secondary may get a lift from the arrival of *Parade* All-American Chris Massey, an all-around athlete from Spiro High School, who should see playing time right away.

Schedule The 1998 season turned sour early when Tulsa whipped OSU, 35-20 in the second game of the season. The Cowboys need to avenge that loss on Sept. 11 and repeat their impressive performance of a year ago against Mississippi State before traveling to Nebraska to open Big 12 play on Oct. 2. The last time OSU beat Nebraska was 1961.

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Stillwater, OK

ENROLLMENT: 19,201

STADIUM: Lewis Field (50,616)

SURFACE: Artificial Turf

1998 RECORD: 5-6

COACH: Bob Simmons

CAREER: 22-24; **HERE:** 22-24

BOWL: None

LETTERMEN RETURNING: 47

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Tony Lindsay*	6-2	190	Jr.
TB	Nathan Simmons*	5-10	197	Sr.
FB	Jeremy Halferty	6-0	245	Jr.
WR	Ethan Howell	6-1	175	Sr.
TE	Garrett Steggs	6-3	245	Sr.
WR	Terrance Richardson	5-9	180	Sr.
LT	Andrew Golembiewski*	6-5	295	Sr.
LG	Bryan Phillips	6-5	285	So.
C	Reynell Lavigne	6-1	290	Sr.
RG	Adam Davis*	6-4	280	Sr.
RT	Kevin Kemp	6-6	300	Jr.
K	Tim Sydnes*	6-2	195	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Tanner Bruce	6-4	240	So.
DT	Cortney Mallory*	6-1	290	Sr.
DT	Zac Akin*	6-1	285	Jr.
DE	Zak Warner	6-4	285	Jr.
LB	Tarrell Knauls*	6-1	240	Sr.
LB	Kenyatta Wright*	6-1	245	Sr.
LB	Jack Golden*	6-1	240	Sr.
CB	Evan Howell*	6-1	175	Sr.
CB	Marcus Jones	5-9	180	So.
SS	J.B. Flowers	6-0	185	Sr.
FS	Adam Edwards	6-0	215	Sr.
P	Russ Schwettmann*	6-3	230	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Nathan Simmons		937	4.6	5	
Tony Lindsay		592	3.9	10	
Jamaal Fobbs		409	4.6	4	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Tony Lindsay		1,442	49.5	7	6
Chris Chaloupka		301	51.1	3	1
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Terrance Richardson		25	337	13.5	2
Marcellus Rivers		22	335	15.2	4
Ethan Howell		11	351	31.9	3

KICKING

Tim Sydnes, 15-of-18 FG (50 long), 31-of-34 PAT

DEFENSE

TKLS	MISC
Kenyatta Wright	71 10 for loss
Tarrell Knauls	59 11 for loss
Evan Howell	54 2 int., 7 PBU
Dwayne Levels	37 3 for loss

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Southwestern La.	W, 44-20
Sept. 11	Tulsa	L, 20-35
Sept. 18	at Mississippi State	W, 42-23
Oct. 2	at Nebraska	L, 17-24
Oct. 9	Texas Tech	L, 17-24
Oct. 23	Kansas State	L, 20-52
Oct. 30	at Texas A&M	L, 6-17
Nov. 6	Texas	L, 34-37
Nov. 13	Kansas	W, 38-28
Nov. 20	at Baylor	W, 24-10
Nov. 27	at Oklahoma	W, 41-26

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	OSU	OPP
Rushing yards per game	205.5	119.5
Yards per rush	4.1	3.2
Passing yards per game	162.1	210.4
Completion percentage	50.4	51.6
Net yards per game	366.5	329.9
Points per game	27.5	26.9
Turnovers gained	23	19



BOB SIMMONS

ALBIREX WASHINGTON/ALSPRINT

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Lubbock, TX
ENROLLMENT: 24,185
STADIUM: Jones Stadium (50,500)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 7-5
COACH: Spike Dykes
CAREER: 76-62-1; **HERE:** 76-62-1
BOWL: Lost Independence (35-18 to Mississippi)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 49

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Rob Peters*	6-3	229	Sr.
TB	Ricky Williams*	5-8	190	Jr.
FB	Sammy Morris	6-0	220	Sr.
WR	Derek Dorris*	6-2	195	Jr.
WR	Tim Baker	6-5	202	Jr.
TE	Kyle Allamon*	6-3	256	Sr.
RT	Matt Heider	6-5	306	So.
RG	Jason May	6-4	299	So.
C	Kyle Sanders	6-2	305	Jr.
LG	Curtis Lowery*	6-5	327	Sr.
LT	Jonathan Gray*	6-5	357	Jr.
K	Chris Birkholz*	6-0	187	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Devin Lemons	6-3	220	Jr.
NT	Terry Patton*	6-2	284	Sr.
DT	Kris Kocurek*	6-5	290	Jr.
DE	Taurus Rucker*	6-0	252	Sr.
LB	Keith Cockrum*	6-2	205	Sr.
LB	Kyle Shipley*	6-2	230	Sr.
LB	Tim Duffie	5-11	227	Sr.
CB	Anthony Malbrough	5-9	185	Sr.
CB	Oscar Solis*	5-8	189	Sr.
SS	Reagan Bownds	5-10	185	Sr.
FS	Kevin Curtis	6-2	195	So.
P	Brian Roberson	6-2	189	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Ricky Williams	1,582	5.2	13	
Rickey Hunter	262	4.4	0	
Rob Peters	125	1.2	3	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Rob Peters	1,269	52.5	9	4
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Derek Dorris	28	395	14.1	3
Jonathan Hawkins	21	252	12.0	1
Ricky Williams	18	176	9.8	0
Kyle Allamon	14	276	19.7	2
KICKING				
Chris Birkholz, 16-of-21 FG (53 long), 23-of-23 PAT				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Kris Kocurek	87	2 for loss		
John Norman	84	—		
Reagan Bownds	68	2 interceptions		
Taurus Rucker	68	3 for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Arizona State	—
Sept. 11	at Southwestern La.	—
Sept. 18	North Texas	W, 30-0
Oct. 2	Texas A&M	L, 10-17
Oct. 9	at Oklahoma State	W, 24-17
Oct. 16	Colorado	L, 17-19
Oct. 23	at Baylor	W, 31-29
Oct. 30	at Missouri	L, 26-28
Nov. 6	Iowa State	W, 31-24
Nov. 13	at Texas	W, 42-35
Nov. 20	Oklahoma	L, 17-20

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TECH	OPP
Rushing yards per game	201.7	118.9
Yards per rush	4.1	2.9
Passing yards per game	202.7	166.1
Completion percentage	52.8	48.8
Net yards per game	404.5	285.0
Points per game	27.0	19.5
Turnovers gained	20	26

TEXAS TECH

RED RAIDERS

Each preseason, as prognosticators attempt to determine league contenders, Top 25 possibilities and so forth, Texas Tech is easy to forget. Yet, by the time postseason arrives, the Red Raiders are rarely forgotten. Tech has been to bowl games five of last six years and has qualified for bowls in each of the last six seasons. No other Big 12 South team can make that claim.

"We're kind of like that little engine that thought he could," said Tech coach Spike Dykes. "We just keep chugging along, trying to get toward the top and not really paying any attention to what people say or don't say about us. And we're not too concerned about tooting our own horns."

Pollsters might be more willing to sing the Raiders' praises if Tech could find a way to be more consistent during the regular season. The Raiders' frequent ups and downs in recent years have been more reminiscent to a rollercoaster than the little engine that Dykes described. Last year, for example, Tech knocked off high-flying Texas and then lost the next week to struggling Oklahoma. The Raiders began 1998 at 6-0, but finished 1-5.

"The inconsistency is a little frustrating," talented junior tailback Ricky Williams said. "It's especially frustrating because of how many close games we played last year. We had a good season, but it could have been great. But we think (1999) can be a great season." Perhaps it can be, but Tech must first fill some big holes and finally solve some major inconsistencies.

Offense Williams is small in stature (5-8), but his impact on a game can be huge. Williams, who possesses amazing quickness and tremendous speed, rushed for 1,582 yards (fourth in the nation) last year and averaged 143.8 per game. And now that Texas' Ricky Williams is in the NFL, Tech's tailback has his sights set on becoming the league's dominant runner.

"A Big 12 running back has led the nation in rushing each of the last three years," Williams said. "I want to be next."

With a solid offensive line in front of him—led by massive left tackle Jonathan Gray—that isn't out of the question. But to prevent defenses from ganging up to stop Williams, quarterback Rob Peters must step up his game. At times last year, Peters was impressive, but like the team itself, his year was marred by inconsistent play. Case in point: In the Raiders' 42-35 upset of Texas, Peters

passed for 322 yards and two touchdowns and scored the winning TD. One week later, he was replaced after passing for 120 yards and committing a key turnover in the loss to Oklahoma. Wide receiver Derek Dorris must also prove he can be the dependable go-to target now that Donnie Hart has departed.

Defense Even with the departure of the Raiders' defensive leader and big-play specialist, end Montae Reagor, the line could be a strength. Senior end Taurus Rucker and junior tackle Kris Kocurek are all-league candidates, while Terry Patton is a solid tackle. The big question for Tech is on the other end, where junior Devin Lemons has emerged as a likely candidate to fill Reagor's vacancy.

In the spring, Dykes experimented by moving hard-hitting free safety John Norman to outside linebacker. If that move works out, the linebacking corps could be very athletic, as Norman would join returning starting middle linebacker Kyle Shipley and former starting strong safety Keith Cockrum. Norman's move to linebacker creates an opening at free safety for talented sophomore Kevin Curtis. Senior Reagan Bownds is an excellent tackler and proven performer at strong safety, while the same could be said of senior Oscar Solis at cornerback.

Special Teams Brian Roberson is an unproven punter, and the Raiders are also concerned about finding a deep snapper. But placekicker Chris Birkholz returns after being nominated for the Lou Groza Award in 1998, hitting 16 of 21 field goals and all 23 PATs. Norman and Dorris form a dangerous kick return duo.

New One to Know In the search to find a replacement for Reagor, remember the name of Aaron Hunt. Tech coaches were extremely impressed with the redshirt freshman defensive end in the spring, and Hunt should see plenty of action this fall.

Schedule Unlike last year, the Red Raiders will be tested early, traveling to to face Arizona State in the opener. That will be tough, but the toughest stretch will be Oct. 2 through Oct. 16 when Tech faces likely bowl contenders Texas A&M, Oklahoma State and Colorado in consecutive weeks.

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

RICKY WILLIAMS



STEPHEN DUNN/ALLSPORT

OKLAHOMA

SOONERS

LOCATION: Norman, OK
ENROLLMENT: 25,000
STADIUM: Owen Field (72,765)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 5-6
COACH: Bob Stoops
CAREER: 0-0; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 52

At this time last year, Oklahoma was attempting to get back to its roots by returning to the wishbone offense. New OU coach Bob Stoops, however, has a different vision of how to bring back memories of the Sooners' past: Win.

The once-mighty Sooners haven't done much of that lately. Oklahoma hasn't won a conference title since 1987 and hasn't produced a winning season since 1993—the first five-year period without a winning record in school history. But perhaps the old adage that states, "It's always darkest before the dawn," applies to these Sooners. Stoops arrives at OU from Florida (where he was defensive coordinator) with a reputation as a defensive genius and master motivator.

And unlike the last two OU coaches—Howard Schnellenberger and John Blake—Stoops immediately earned the respect of Oklahoma players and fans with his no-nonsense work ethic, no excuses attitude and no wild promises approach.

"I believe you can't blow smoke until you have a fire," he said. "Obviously, we plan on winning every game and contending for league and national titles, but I don't know that it will happen this year."

It almost certainly won't. But with Stoops and his talented staff at the helm, and with some decent talent in place, the Sooners could be dramatically improved in 1999. With a few good breaks, the Sooners could easily break the losing record streak and take the first step toward rekindling past glory.

Offense Oklahoma was a decent running team last year, but the Sooners were dead last in the Big 12 and 107th nationally in passing. OU is counting on junior college quarterback transfer John Heupel to revive the passing attack. Heupel, a first-team JUCO All-American last year after passing for 2,308 yards and 28 touchdowns, enrolled in January and took the majority of the snaps last spring. Stoops says Heupel is a perfect fit for his offensive philosophy, which emphasizes a balanced attack and features a variety of short, timing passes.

In all likelihood, talented senior Jarraill Jackson will be on the receiving end of a majority of those Heupel passes. But former starting quarterback Brandon Daniels and split end Ahmed Kabba are talented receiving prospects, as well.

While the passing game should be improved, the running attack will probably suffer without De'Mond Parker, who left early for the NFL. Michael Thornton, Johnnie Balous, Josh Norman and Seth Littrell are all solid prospects, but they don't yet compare to Parker. With the return of left tackle Scott Kempenich and left guard Adam Carpenter from injuries, the offensive line should be improved.

Defense The best news for Stoops is that Oklahoma doesn't need to make dramatic improvements for the Sooners to be successful. In fact, a repeat of last year, in terms of defensive effectiveness, would suit most Sooners fans just fine. OU finished sixth nationally in total defense a year ago, limiting foes to under 280 yards per game.

The loss of defensive lineman Kelly Gregg leaves the Sooners without a star defensive lineman, but the linebackers and defensive backs could be very good. Inside linebacker Rocky Calmus returns after an exceptional true freshman season, while Brandon Moore, Nick Simpson, Armand Spence and Michael Dulaney give OU some impressive talent and depth.

In the secondary, Ontei Jones has moved from weak-side linebacker to fill Gana Joseph's strong safety position, while Rodney Rideau returns at free safety after a

strong finish in 1998. Cornerbacks Pee Wee Woods, Mike Woods, William Bartee and redshirt freshman Andre Woolfork will need to prove they are up to the challenge of being left in more man-to-man coverages in Stoops' high-pressure defensive attack.

Special Teams Walk-on kicker Matt Reeves came through when pressed into duty last year, but he has limited range. Sophomore Jeff Ferguson was inconsistent as a kicker, but was a solid punter (41.5-yard average). Jackson also is an exciting return specialist, averaging more than 11 yards per punt return in '98.

New One to Know In addition to Heupel, another newcomer could give the Sooners a major lift in the backfield. Incoming freshman running back Jamar Moze, *USA Today's* 1998 Missouri Player of the Year, should see some early playing and could have a significant impact.

Schedule The Sooners could be 3-0 before beginning a brutal five-game stretch on Oct. 2. OU faces Notre Dame, Texas, Texas A&M, Colorado and Missouri in consecutive games. If the Sooners can steal a win or two from that group, Oklahoma could be bowl bound. If they go 0-5, it will be another long year.



COREY CALLENS

BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Josh Heupel	6-2	205	Jr.
TB	Seth Littrell	5-10	213	Jr.
FB	Michael Thornton	5-7	187	Sr.
FL	Jarraill Jackson*	5-9	193	Sr.
SE	Ahmed Kabba	6-1	190	Jr.
TE	Matt Anderson	6-2	250	Sr.
RT	Stockar McDougle	6-5	354	Sr.
RG	Jason Bronson	6-3	272	So.
C	Matt O'Neal	6-3	262	Sr.
LG	Adam Carpenter*	6-3	300	Jr.
LT	Scott Kempenich*	6-6	325	Jr.
K	Matt Reeves*	5-10	175	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Darryl Bright*	6-4	269	Jr.
DT	Bary Holleyman	6-4	269	So.
DT	Corey Callens*	6-1	266	Jr.
DE	Cornelius Burton	6-5	275	Sr.
LB	Brandon Moore*	6-1	223	Jr.
LB	Rocky Calmus*	6-3	226	So.
LB	Armand Spence	6-0	237	Jr.
CB	Mike Woods*	5-10	188	Sr.
CB	Pee Wee Woods	5-8	178	Sr.
SS	Onte Jones*	5-9	191	Jr.
FS	Rodney Rideau*	6-1	191	Sr.
P	Jeff Ferguson*	5-10	175	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Seth Littrell		205	3.9	0	
Brandon Daniels		106	1.8	0	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Jake Sills		502	46.9	6	5
Brandon Daniels		256	40.0	1	4
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jarraill Jackson		11	179	16.3	0
Ahmed Kabba		7	128	18.3	3
Matt Anderson		2	80	40.0	1
KICKING		Matt Reeves, 10-of-13 FG (37 long), 6-of-7 PAT			
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Onteil Jones		95	15 for loss		
Brandon Moore		67	3 for loss		
Rocky Calmus		45	7 for loss		
Darryl Bright		30	5 for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 11	Indiana State	—
Sept. 18	Baylor	W, 28-16
Sept. 25	at Louisville	—
Oct. 2	at Notre Dame	—
Oct. 9	Texas (Dallas)	L, 3-34
Oct. 23	Texas A&M	L, 0-29
Oct. 30	at Colorado	L, 25-27
Nov. 6	Missouri	L, 6-20
Nov. 13	at Iowa State	W, 17-14
Nov. 20	at Texas Tech	W, 20-17
Nov. 27	Oklahoma State	L, 26-41

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	OU	OPP
Rushing yards per game	183.4	121.1
Yards per rush	3.8	3.1
Passing yards per game	109.9	154.8
Completion percentage	41.7	49.7
Net yards per game	293.3	278.8
Points per game	16.7	20.8
Turnovers gained	20	26

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7

Big Twelve Conference

LOCATION: Waco, TX
ENROLLMENT: 12,500
STADIUM: Floyd Casey Stadium (50,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 2-9
COACH: Kevin Steele
CAREER: 0-0; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 37

BAYLOR

BEARS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Odell James*	6-3	226	Jr.
TB	Darrell Bush*	5-8	202	Jr.
FB	Derek Lagway*	6-1	235	Jr.
WR	Robert Darnell	5-11	183	So.
WR	Andra Fuller	5-10	171	So.
TE	Andrew Obriotti*	6-2	234	So.
QT	Greg Jerman*	6-5	273	So.
QG	Scott Childress	6-1	334	Sr.
C	Joe Jackson*	6-2	269	So.
SG	Chris Watton*	6-3	300	Sr.
ST	Luke Nichols	6-4	297	Jr.
K	Kyle Atteberry	6-0	174	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Eddrick Brooks	6-2	250	Sr
DT	James Calvin*	6-1	289	Sr
DT	Dwight Johnson*	6-4	276	Sr.
DE	Justin Snow*	6-3	240	Sr.
LB	Rodney Smith*	6-0	226	Sr.
LB	Kris Micheaux*	6-1	261	Jr.
LB	Jason Jackson*	6-0	234	Sr.
CB	Gary Baxter*	6-1	193	Jr.
CB	Robert Neal*	5-9	197	Sr.
FS	Sean Armistead*	5-10	183	Sr.
SS	Tommie Black	6-0	208	Jr.
P	Kyle Atteberry*	6-0	174	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Darrell Bush	357	3.4	3	
Derek Lagway	335	3.6	3	
Odell James	282	3.0	2	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Jermaine Alfred	1,268	51.6	2	7
Odell James	435	52.9	1	7
Michael Odum	128	47.4	1	0
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Derek Lagway	37	266	7.2	0
Andra Fuller	6	50	8.3	0
KICKING				
None				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Rodney Smith	106	2 INTS, 8 PBU		
Sean Armistead	90			
Jason Jackson	75	10 for loss		
Kris Micheaux	72	6 for loss		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Boston College	—
Sept. 11	UNLV	—
Sept. 18	at Oklahoma	L, 16-28
Sept. 25	Texas	L, 20-30
Oct. 2	North Texas	—
Oct. 9	at Texas A&M	L, 14-35
Oct. 23	Texas Tech	L, 29-31
Oct. 30	at Kansas State	L, 6-49
Nov. 6	at Kansas	W, 31-24
Nov. 13	Colorado	L, 16-18
Nov. 20	Oklahoma State	L, 10-24

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	BU	OPP
Rushing yards per game	110.4	214.1
Yards per rush	2.8	4.8
Passing yards per game	166.5	227.2
Completion percentage	51.7	50.5
Net yards per game	276.8	441.3
Points per game	17.7	29.0
Turnovers gained	23	20

The days when Baylor seemed to be an annual contender for bowl games seem like a distant memory now. The Bears' last bowl appearance was in 1994, their last outright conference title came two decades ago and the last time they won more than two games in a season was 1996.

Obviously, school officials and long-suffering fans realize it may take a super hero-type to turn the Bears' football fortunes around. But since the "Man of Steel" wasn't available, Baylor did the next best thing and hired a man named Steele. First-year head coach Kevin Steele, who was most recently a defensive assistant coach with the NFL's Carolina Panthers, knows all about Baylor's recent history. But unlike the previous head coach, Dave Roberts, Steele isn't using prior records or inherited talent as an excuse.

"I haven't really spent much time looking at the past, except for the positive traditions, because I wanted to keep everything upbeat," Steele says. "I really do not think this (program) is at rock-bottom. I think it's perceived to be maybe in worse shape than it actually is. Somebody said, 'Well, that's not a good thing to say because you're really kind of putting pressure on yourself.'"

"But that's the way I feel."

Steele also feels good about Baylor's future. Not years from now, but rather, weeks from now. And with 18 returning starters, the Bears should be improved in 1999. Considering the school's recent football history, however, that fact alone probably shouldn't encourage Baylor fans to make their holiday plans around a bowl trip.

Offense While Steele says he doesn't believe the program is at rock bottom, the offense was pretty close last year. The Bears finished 106th nationally in total offense in 1998, averaging just over 276 yards per game. For Baylor to show any significant signs of improvement this season, the Bears must receive better play at quarterback. Senior Jermaine Alfred and junior Odell James split time under center last year, but both were plagued by inconsistent play.

Sophomore Mike Odum and freshman Brandon Jones will also be given an opportunity to win the starting job, which Steele will announce on Aug. 21. Whoever emerges as the starter won't have many proven receivers to look to for support. Sophomore Andra Fuller is the Bears' leading returning wide receiver, catching six passes for 50 yards last year.

Fortunately for the Bears, the news is better at running back, where speedy junior tailback Darrell Bush, who broke Baylor's freshman rushing record in 1997, returns along with talented junior fullback Derek Lagway. Bush and Lagway, along with reserves like Elijah Burkins, Melvin Barnett and Adrian White should benefit from what appears to be an improved offensive line.

Sophomore left tackle Greg Jerman may be Baylor's best blocker, while senior right tackle Tyshaun Whitson has the size (6-6, 310) and the strength to control opponents. Steele also has been impressed with sophomore guard Joe Jackson.

Defense The Bears were awful on offense last year, but they weren't much better on defense, ranking No. 101 nationally and last in the Big 12. But with any kind of luck, Baylor could possess a dramatically improved defense in 1999. The secondary is extreme-

ly solid, returning All-Big 12 candidate Gary Baxter at one corner along with some talented performers on the other side. Senior free safety Sean Armistead is an excellent tackler, while Curtis Henderson and Tommie Black give the Bears some outstanding athletes at strong safety.

A former strong safety, senior Rodney Smith, should also improve Baylor's corps of linebackers. Smith, last year's leading tackler, has been switched to linebacker, where he joins solid performers like Kris Micheaux, Jason Jackson and McKinley Bowie. The biggest defensive concern is up front, where the Bears were pushed around far too often last year.

Special Teams Senior Kyle Atteberry is a reliable and consistent punter, averaging more than 43 yard per punt last year. This year, Atteberry may also handle the placekicking duties. Fuller is an exciting punt returner, while Burkins is a dangerous kick-off return specialist.

New One to Know Although he was redshirted last year and suspended from the team last spring, running back Ben Gay is expected to be a factor this fall. Based on potential alone, Gay could be the most gifted tailback prospect at Baylor in years.

Schedule The Bears have a relatively soft nonconference schedule, which could help Steele get off to a good start. Baylor also gets Texas at home. Since 1984, the Bears are 5-2 at home against the Longhorns. Baylor will play host to Texas Tech and Colorado, teams the Bears lost to in 1998 by a combined total of four points.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

PROJECTED RECORD: 3-8

INSIDE THE BIG TWELVE

TEAMS ON THE RISE: After years of big-game breakdowns, **Texas A&M** had a breakthrough season in 1998, going 2-2 against teams ranked in the national Top 3. With 18 starters returning and a new confidence in big-game settings, the Aggies could be on the verge of something really big in 1999. Another team that could be on the verge of a dramatic rise is **Oklahoma**. It probably won't happen this year for the Sooners, but new OU coach Bob Stoops will have Oklahoma back in bowl contention in the very near future.

TEAMS ON THE FALL: Life after Corby Jones and Devin West could be tough on the **Missouri Tigers**. Mizzou, which made back-to-back bowl appearances in 1997 and 1998 and nearly pulled off huge upsets in both seasons, will probably struggle to get to six wins and qualify for a bowl game this season. The Kansas State Wildcats could also take a step back after losing many of their big-play offensive stars.

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: **Ricky Williams, RB, Texas Tech.** A Big 12 running back has led the nation in rushing in each of the last three years. If anybody can keep that streak intact, it's Texas Tech's lightning-quick Ricky Williams. When Williams turns on the jets in the open field, perhaps only the "Masked Rider"—Texas Tech's mascot, who is mounted on a black quarterhorse—can chase him down.

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: **Darren Howard, DE, Kansas State.** The Wildcats lost plenty of offensive punch from last season, but with a defense led by Howard, K-State can still deliver a knock-out blow. Howard led the Big 12 with 10.5 sacks in 1998 and also had a total of 17 tackles behind the line of scrimmage. If Howard isn't the Big 12's best defender this year, the award could go to his Kansas State teammate Mark Simoneau. Oklahoma State linebacker Kenyatta Wright also is a top contender.

MUST-SEE GAMES: The game of the year in the Big 12, **Texas A&M at Nebraska on Nov. 6** in Lincoln, could have national championship implications on the line, as both teams could be undefeated when they meet. But the loser of this game might not have to wait long for a shot at redemption. It's quite conceivable—probably even likely—that the Nov. 6 game will be a preview of the Dec. 4 Big 12 championship game in San Antonio. Other interesting matchups include **Nebraska at Texas on Oct. 23**, **Colorado at Kansas State on Nov. 6** and **Texas at Texas A&M on Nov. 26**. The most interesting nonconference game involving a Big 12 team could be Colorado's Sept. 25 visit to Washington. The Huskies are led by Rick Neuheisel, who left Colorado in the middle of recruiting season last winter.

MOST UNDERRATED PLAYER: **Dante Hall, RB, Texas A&M.** In a league annually loaded with top running backs, Hall is often overlooked, which is easy to do considering his 5-foot-8 stature. But Hall's importance to Texas A&M cannot be underestimated. Despite the Aggies' rotating running backs philosophy, Hall has averaged right at 1,000 yards rushing in each of the past two seasons. And in 1998, he was particularly effective in the Aggies' two biggest wins, going over 100 yards against Nebraska and Kansas State. Hall doesn't possess blazing speed or tremendous power, but his moves are often truly sensational.

NEXT STOP, NFL: From a NFL scout's perspective, the Big 12 is loaded with linemen: **Colorado's Ryan Johanningmeier**, **Missouri's Rob Riti**, **Texas' Roger Roesler**, **Oklahoma State's Adam Davis** and **Texas A&M's Semisi Heimuli** could all make outstanding linemen in the pros. On the defensive side of the ball, **Kansas State end Darren Howard** has the size, speed and quickness that pro scouts covet.

And **Texas A&M punter Shane Lechler** should enjoy a long and profitable pro career.

JOHNNY ON THE SPOT: **Texas running backs Hodges Mitchell and Victor Ike** are good prospects, but their task for this year is indeed daunting. Together, Mitchell and Ike will occupy the tailback position where 1998 Heisman Trophy winner Ricky Williams became the all-time leading rusher in Division I-A history. And they will assume that role without the benefit of four starting offensive linemen from a year ago. Good luck.

RECRUITING WINNERS: For much of the last decade and change, many of the top high school players in Texas have left the state to play college football, which has had a dramatic impact on the quality of collegiate football in the Lone Star State. But the tide may have turned last February, as Texas and Texas A&M cleaned house in the Lone Star State and prevented other schools from luring the top talent away from the state. The Longhorns' class was ranked No. 1 by most recruiting services, while the Aggies were ranked No. 5 by most of those same services. "I think we are (winning the battle to keep Texas talent in Texas)," A&M coach R.C. Slocum said. "Anybody who got (kids) out of Texas this year had to work very hard to do so."

RECRUITING LOSER: Rick Neuheisel's decision to leave Colorado for Washington in the midst of the recruiting process cost the Buffaloes some top recruits. By Colorado's standards, the 1999 recruiting class was merely mediocre.



STEVE DUNN/ALSPORT

BIG TWELVE PROFILE

Texas Tech Running Back Ricky Williams

In his first two seasons at Texas Tech, Ricky Williams has proven he has the speed, quickness and elusiveness to shake loose of the best defenders in college football. Now, he's determined to prove he can break away from something even more imposing: The long and lingering shadows of that "other" Ricky Williams.

In addition to winning the 1998 Heisman Trophy and a pair of Doak Walker Awards the last two seasons, Texas' Ricky Williams became the leading rusher in NCAA Division I-A history last year. Consequently, Williams' dread-locked silhouette looms large in the Lone Star State—and everywhere else in college football, for that matter.

But the elder Ricky Williams, who was the first-round draft pick of the New Orleans Saints last April, is now attempting to become a big star in the Big Easy. That leaves a big vacancy in the Big 12 that the younger Williams hopes to fill.

"I'd be lying if I said I wasn't excited about being Ricky Williams this year, instead of being 'the other Ricky Williams,'" said the Texas Tech junior tailback, who finished fourth nationally in rushing last season with 1,582 yards. "In the past, (the national media) would talk about him and say a lot of nice things, which he definitely deserved. Then they might mention that Texas Tech has a Ricky Williams, too."

"That never bothered me, because I knew there would come a day when he went to the pros, and I would get a chance to make a name for myself. I learned a lot about being a patient running back, setting up your blocks and so forth by watching Ricky, and I have a lot of respect for him and all he accomplished. But I am looking forward to this new role. A Big 12 running back has led the nation in rushing each of the last three years. I want to be next." The amazingly quick Williams could give Wisconsin's Ron Dayne and other big-name running backs across the country a run for their money in the pursuit of the NCAA rushing title. Even the other Ricky Williams' NCAA record isn't completely out of the question.

In 22 starts over the past two seasons, Tech's Williams has rushed for 2,476 yards. After his first two seasons in Austin, Texas' Williams had 2,262 yards—214 yards less than the Texas Tech star has at the same point in his career. For the record, Tech's Williams needs 3,803 yards to break the Division I-A rushing record. To do that, he would need to average 173 yards per game over his final two regular seasons.

"It's a long shot," says Texas Tech backup tailback Rickey Hunter, Williams' teammate and close friend. "But I wouldn't bet against him doing anything, including breaking that record and leading nation in rushing."

Regardless of whether he breaks any records or not, Tech's Williams is certainly worthy of the spotlight attention that is bound to come his way this season. He has a relentless work ethic and a soft-spoken, yet outgoing personality that makes him a fan favorite in Lubbock. And he is especially adored by all the "little people" out there. At 5-foot-7 and about 185 pounds, Williams is proof that there is still a place for guys with big hearts and small bodies in major college football.

"Ricky gives it all he's got on every play," Texas Tech coach Spike Dykes said. "People love to see that, and I think some people like seeing the little guy do well because they might be able to relate to his size. Of course, there aren't many people on the planet who can relate to his quickness, but Ricky is truly one of those blue-collar kind of guys who uses every ounce of his athletic ability to get the job done. He's a joy to coach."

Pacific-10

BY BOB CUNNINGHAM

CONFERENCE

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Keith Smith	Arizona	5-11	200	Sr.
RB	Trung Canidate ^(a)	Arizona	5-11	190	Sr.
RB	J.R. Redmond	Arizona State	6-0	205	Sr.
WR	R. Jay Soward	USC	5-11	175	Sr.
WR	Danny Farmer	UCLA	6-4	210	Sr.
TE	Russell Stewart	Stanford	6-5	245	Sr.
T	Jason White	Oregon State	6-5	315	Sr.
G	Chad Ward	Washington	6-5	315	Jr.
C	John Romero	California	6-3	315	Sr.
G	Travis Claridge	USC	6-6	310	Sr.
T	Manuia Savea	Arizona	6-2	295	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DE	Sultan Abdul-Malik	USC	6-3	225	Jr.
DT	Jabari Issa ^(d)	Washington	6-6	295	Sr.
DE	Andre Carter	California	6-4	245	Jr.
OLB	Sekou Saniyka	California	6-3	230	Sr.
ILB	Marcus Bell	Arizona	6-2	230	Jr.
ILB	Ryan Nece	UCLA	6-2	215	So.
OLB	DaShon Polk	Arizona	6-2	230	Sr.
CB	Courtney Jackson	Arizona State	6-1	190	Sr.
CB	Antuan Simmons	USC	5-11	185	Jr.
SS	Tim Smith	Stanford	6-4	230	Sr.
FS	Lamont Thompson	Washington State	6-2	215	Jr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Nathan Villegas	Oregon	5-9	165	Sr.
P	Stephen Baker	Arizona State	5-11	185	So.
KR	Ryan Roques	UCLA	6-0	180	Sr.

^(a) Offensive Player of the Year ^(d) Defensive Player of the Year

PROJECTED FINISH

	CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1. Arizona	7-1	11-1
2. USC	6-2	9-3
3. UCLA	5-3	7-4
3. Washington	5-3	7-4
5. Arizona State	4-4	6-5
5. California	4-4	6-5
7. Oregon	3-5	5-6
8. Stanford	3-5	4-7
9. Washington State	2-6	5-7
10. Oregon State	1-7	3-8

KEITH SMITH



TOM HAUCK/ALLSPORT

ARIZONA

WILDCATS

Life is as fine as frog hair if you're a University of Arizona football booster. Consider the following:

- The Wildcats are coming off a 12-1 season, best in school history.
- The Wildcats return virtually every one of their skill-position players and the vast majority of last year's starters overall.
- Most of the other Pac-10 contenders graduated top quarterbacks or other key personnel.
- You have one of the better coaches around in Dick Tomey.

Arizona is an exciting team, with explosive running back Trung Canidate and steady quarterback Keith Smith leading an efficient offense that makes a minimum of mistakes. And on top of that, Tucson is the home of "Desert Swarm."

In reality, the defense probably isn't quite as good as those top units of the early and mid-90s. But the team as a whole is tops in the Pac-10 going into '99... and perhaps even the best in the country.

"We're trying to take what's useful from our experience last year," said Tomey, who noted a flipside. "We had a good year, but if you think about how much you've done, it doesn't help."

Tomey resists the temptation to anoint his team as the favorite, reminding followers of the year-to-year balance of the Pac-10.

"The best way I can put it is that we were 12-1 and Cal and Arizona State were 5-6 and we had to fight our buns off to beat them," he said. "It's too competitive to say what can happen."

In addition to the aforementioned Canidate and Smith, the 'Cats also return top receiver Dennis Northcutt, 80 percent of last season's starting offensive line, three-quarters of the incumbent defensive line, and three other defenders who merited all-conference citations.

In short, the rest of the Pac-10 is in a heap a' trouble.

Offense Not only do the 'Cats have Smith, who completed nearly 69 percent of his passes, but they have the conference's top backup in junior Ortege Jenkins, who has started nine games over the past two seasons.

Northcutt is a top-flight wideout, hauling in 63 catches for more than 900 yards a year ago. Senior receiver Brad Brennan is steady as a possession guy, and junior tight end Brandon Manumaleuna could contribute, too, although he's geared more to the running game—thanks to a 280-plus pound frame.

In Canidate, the 'Cats have perhaps their most explosive running back ever. He came into national prominence with a huge game against Arizona State last November. He finished '98 with an awesome 73 yards-per-carry average en route to more than 1,200 yards and 10 touchdowns. The offensive line is versatile and mostly experienced, led by all-conference tackle Manuia Savea.

Unless a sudden rash of injuries cripple it, the Arizona offense looks to sport more weapons than any defense can hope to contain. Last year's third-best attack in the Pac-10 is now clearly No. 1.

Defense As if this might be the weakness of the team, no one's talking about an Arizona defense which returns nine starters and will likely enter the season with a starting 11 consisting entirely of previous regulars.

Linebackers Marcus Bell and DaShon Polk are two of the conference's best, the former possibly winding up as a Butkus Award nominee. The front four is skilled and deep, with the lone newcomer being a junior with six previous starts in his college career.

And the secondary welcomes back three starters from '98 while the fourth projected regular, senior Leland Gayles, edged out returning starter Kelvin Hunter for a

cornerback slot opposite the great Chris McAlister a year ago, but was soon sidelined with a neck injury. This group could be better than it was a year ago, even with the departure of McAlister, arguably the best corner ever at UA.

Arizona was second in the Pac-10 in defense a year ago. While everyone focuses on the 'Cats explosive offense, it's the 'D' that may be the key to national title aspirations.

Special Teams Northcutt is reliable as a returner of both punts and kickoffs, and reflects the rest of the team's '99 emphasis on experience. Kicker Mark McDonald overcame a rocky beginning to '98 to settle in as a solid, late-game marksman. Redshirt sophomore Chris Palic is the leading contender to become the regular punter, a position that figures to get as much work in '99 as the Maytag repairman.

New One to Know Who's new? Arizona is deep, talented and experienced with virtually all its key personnel returning. The one newcomer of note is Gayles, who isn't really a "true" newcomer but was away for most of '98.

Schedule The Wildcats get a stern test before September even arrives, playing at Penn State Aug. 28 in the Pigskin Classic. That rugged trip to Happy Valley to face Joe Paterno and his Nittany Lions might mark the only time in 12 games that Arizona isn't favored to win this season. Their toughest Pac-10 tilts are at home against USC and Washington, and on the road at UCLA and Arizona State. If they remain healthy, they'll vie for a berth in the national title game.



MANUIA SAVEA

PROJECTED RECORD: 11-1

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Tucson, AZ
ENROLLMENT: 34,000
STADIUM: Arizona Stadium (57,803)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 12-1
COACH: Dick Tomey
CAREER: 147-98-7; **HERE:** 84-52-4
BOWL: Won Holiday (23-20 over Nebraska)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 47

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
QB	Keith Smith*	5-11	200	Sr.	
RB	Trung Canidate*	5-11	200	Sr.	
FB	Jim Wendler	5-10	220	Sr.	
WR	Dennis Northcutt*	5-11	170	Sr.	
WR	Brad Brennan	5-10	175	Sr.	
TE	Brandon Manumaleuna*	6-2	285	Jr.	
LT	Makoa Freitas	6-4	280	So.	
LG	Steven Grace*	6-2	275	So.	
C	Bruce Wiggins*	6-3	275	Jr.	
RG	Markes McFadden	6-4	315	Jr.	
RT	Manuia Savea*	6-2	295	Sr.	
K	Mark McDonald*	6-1	200	Sr.	

DEFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
DE	Joe Tafoya*	6-4	260	Jr.	
DT	Keoni Fraser*	6-0	285	So.	
DT	Anthony Thomas	6-1	280	Jr.	
DE	Mike Robertson*	6-2	230	Jr.	
LB	DaShon Polk*	6-2	230	Sr.	
LB	Marcus Bell*	6-2	230	Sr.	
LB	Scooter Sprotte*	5-11	220	Sr.	
CB	Kelvin Hunter*	5-9	170	Sr.	
CB	Leland Gayles	5-9	180	Sr.	
SS	Greg Payne*	5-10	190	Sr.	
FS	Rafell Jones*	5-10	195	Sr.	
P	Chris Palic	6-3	195	So.	

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Trung Canidate	1,220	7.3	10	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Keith Smith	1,732	68.5	13	7
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Dennis Northcutt	63	922	14.6	6
Brad Brennan	15	314	20.9	3

KICKING
 Mark McDonald, 8 of 17 FGs (long 41),
 50 for 52 PATs

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Marcus Bell	139	Led Pac-10 in tackles
Rafell Jones	59	2 INTs
Scooter Sprotte	58	4 forced fumbles

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 28	at Penn State	—
Sept. 4	at TCU	—
Sept. 11	Middle Tennessee	—
Sept. 18	Stanford	W, 31-14
Sept. 25	at Washington State	W, 41-7
Oct. 9	USC	—
Oct. 16	UTEP	—
Oct. 23	Oregon	W, 38-3
Oct. 30	at UCLA	L, 28-52
Nov. 6	Washington	W, 31-28
Nov. 13	at Oregon State	W, 28-7
Nov. 27	at Arizona State	W, 50-42

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

PAC-10 RANK		
Total Offense	.....	3rd
Scoring Offense	.....	3rd
Total Defense	.....	2nd
Scoring Defense	.....	2nd

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Los Angeles, CA
ENROLLMENT: 28,100
STADIUM: Memorial Coliseum (92,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 8-5
COACH: Paul Hackett
CAREER: 21-25-1; **HERE:** 8-5
BOWL: Lost Sun (28-19 to Texas Christian)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 41

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Carson Palmer*	6-4	220	So.
FB	Brennan Ochs	6-0	230	Sr.
RB	Chad Morton*	5-8	185	Sr.
FL	R. Jay Soward*	5-11	175	Sr.
SE	Windrell Hayes	6-0	200	Sr.
TE	Antoine Harris*	6-4	245	Jr.
LT	Brent McCaffrey*	6-5	270	Jr.
LG	Jason Grain*	6-5	310	Sr.
C	Matt McShane*	6-5	285	Sr.
RG	Travis Claridge*	6-6	310	Sr.
RT	Matt Welch*	6-6	295	Jr.
K	David Bell	6-0	195	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
LDE	Sultan Abdul-Malik*	6-3	225	Jr.
LDT	Ennis Davis*	6-4	295	Jr.
RDT	Aaron Williams*	6-4	270	Sr.
RDE	S.Abdul-Shaheed	6-4	260	Jr.
OLB	Zeke Moreno*	6-3	240	Jr.
MLB	Markus Steele	6-2	235	Jr.
OLB	Darryl Knight	6-3	215	So.
CB	Tanquerary Clark	6-0	180	Sr.
CB	Antuan Simmons*	5-11	185	Jr.
SS	David Gibson*	6-2	215	Sr.
FS	Ifeanyi Ohalet	6-2	215	Jr.
P	Mike MacGillivray*	5-10	205	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Chad Morton	985	4.9	6	
Petros Papadakis	365	3.9	8	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Carson Palmer	1,475	54.6	6	6
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
R. Jay Soward	44	679	15.4	6
Windrell Hayes	24	340	14.2	2
KICKING				
None				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
David Gibson	85	3 forced fumbles		
Zeke Moreno	66	43 unassisted		
Antuan Simmons	55	3 INTs		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Hawaii	—
Sept. 18	San Diego State	W, 35-6
Sept. 25	at Oregon	L, 13-17
Oct. 2	Oregon State	W, 40-20
Oct. 9	at Arizona	—
Oct. 16	at Notre Dame	W, 10-0
Oct. 23	Stanford	W, 34-9
Oct. 30	at California	L, 31-32
Nov. 6	Arizona State	W, 35-24
Nov. 13	at Washington State	W, 42-14
Nov. 20	UCLA	L, 17-34
Nov. 26	Louisiana Tech	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	PAC-10 RANK
Total Offense	9th
Scoring Offense	5th
Total Defense	1st
Scoring Defense	1st

USC

TROJANS

A defensive-oriented team a year ago, USC will rely on offensive firepower as it attempts to return to Pac-10 elite status in 1999.

Gone to the play-for-pay ranks are All-American linebacker Chris Claiborne and All-Pac 10 cornerback Daylon McCutcheon, the two mainstays of a defense that was tops in the conference last season.

Offensively, the Trojans' only key loss is receiver Billy Miller. Sophomore quarterback Carson Palmer has an inviting target in big-play specialist R. Jay Soward, and returning tailback Chad Morton gained well over 1,000 yards in 1998. On campus, references to "Y2K" have been replaced by Y2PH... "Year 2 under Paul Hackett." The former NFL offensive coordinator got mixed results during his first year in Troy, leading SC to a shutout victory over Notre Dame but failing to halt the Trojans' debilitating 8-year losing skein to crosstown rival UCLA.

USC enjoyed a winning record and played in a bowl game. But the Trojans came out disinterested in the Sun Bowl against TCU and were beaten, 28-19, despite going in as 16-point favorites.

With this year's Pac-10 appearing to be "Arizona and the rest", the Trojans hope to make a strong run toward a Rose Bowl berth. Their last visit to Pasadena—other than to face the Bruins—was in '97 when they defeated Northwestern.

Offense Palmer has many attributes. He's big and strong, yet relatively mobile. He makes few mistakes for a young quarterback and seems to play with confidence at all times. His arm is cannon-like. If he's on cue in '99, the USC passing attack could be explosive.

R. Jay Soward, a fifth-year senior, has had a solid college career. And yet he seems to be an underachiever, battling academic ineligibility and the pressure of being a premier athlete during John Robinson's tenure as head coach. He caught 44 passes in '98. The Trojans would like to see it closer to 60 this season. Senior Windrell Hayes, who takes over for Miller, and tight end Antoine Harris will get most of the remaining receptions.

USC, as always, will try to run the ball as often as possible. Morton is a solid, if unspectacular back and he'll be supported by a standout offensive line that returns all its starters from last fall. Included in that group is All-American candidate Travis Claridge, a 300-plus pound guard. That's nothing new. The Trojans always seem to boast an All-American offensive lineman, don't they?

Defense You don't just replace athletes such as Claiborne and McCutcheon without missing a few beats, but USC is well-stocked with young talent that should make the transition swift and relatively painless.

The defensive front should be excellent, with returning starters Sultan Abdul-Malik and Ennis Davis both having earned all-conference recognition. Senior Aaron Williams is also experienced, having made five starts in '98.

Junior Zeke Moreno is the lone returning starting linebacker, but he's a good one. And Hackett is excited about a JUCO All-American transfer, Markus Steele, who may have the opportunity to seize a starting spot immediately upon his arrival in the fall.

David Gibson, who converted to linebacker last season and played well, moves back to anchor the secondary from his accustomed strong safety slot. He is joined by another returning starter, cornerback Antuan Simmons. The other two slots will be filled from a plethora of impressively credentialed candidates.

USC's defense won't be as sturdy as it was a year ago, but don't expect a big falloff.

Special Teams Soward is one of the country's most explosive kick returners. Figure him to bring at least two back the distance. Either junior David Bell or sophomore David Newbury will take over the placekicking duties for graduated Adam Abrams, while punter Mike MacGillivray will attempt to follow up a solid freshman season effort.

New One to Know Hayes could end up as an excellent complement to Soward, a possession receiver with better speed than his predecessor. He could be the reason Hackett employs his offense to throw downfield more in '99.

Schedule The Trojans have a very real shot at going into their Oct. 9 date in Tucson with a 4-0 mark. With that kind of confidence in tow, anything can happen against the Wildcats. USC will follow its game at Arizona by going to South Bend, Ind. to face Notre Dame—a brutal two-game trip. The game at California will also be a tussle, but nothing compared to the battle to end the losing streak against the Bruins. It says here that SC will get it done and play somewhere other than in Pasadena on New Year's Day.

PROJECTED RECORD: 9-3



R. JAY SOWARD

UCLA

BRUINS

The 1998 season was a very successful one for UCLA coach Bob Toledo and the Bruins, although it ended much more negatively than it began.

After whipping archrival USC by 17 points to improve to 10-0, the Bruins were in line for a berth in the national championship game, the Fiesta Bowl. All they had to do was win a makeup game at Miami to end the regular season and they would likely battle Tennessee for all the marbles.

But the Bruins' defense, inconsistent throughout most of the season, did them in against the Hurricanes. The 48-42 loss "relegated" the Bruins to the Rose Bowl, where they lost to Wisconsin to finish the year 10-2.

Realistically, the Bruins aren't likely to fare as well in '99, mainly because their Heisman Trophy candidate of a quarterback, Cade McNown, is now in the NFL. UCLA's offense, No. 1 in both scoring and yardage under McNown's leadership, is certain to fall a notch or two.

Slated to replace McNown is Drew Bennett, who threw all of five passes in '98. What he lacks in experience, however, he makes up for in credentials. Bennett, a junior, earned a scholarship after coming to the program two years ago as a walk-on.

The Bruins offense should still be relatively productive, with their most talented running back (Jermaine Lewis) and receiver (Danny Farmer) back to help lead the way.

The often-maligned defense returns predominantly intact... and with a year's invaluable experience added to their collective resumes. This UCLA team may not be as explosive as last year's, but it could be better balanced—which means it may be better prepared for the final stretch.

Offense Bennett will depend heavily on the ground game spearheaded by Lewis and Deshaun Foster. The two combined for more than 1,100 yards and 21 touchdowns a year ago, but will have to repeat or exceed those efforts behind a mostly inexperienced offensive line that returns only two starters, juniors Brian Polak and Oscar Cabrera.

UCLA's receiving corps is first-rate. Farmer, a Biletnikoff Award candidate and returning first team All-Pac 10 performer, combines above-average speed with exceptional hands and courage. He'll be complemented by Brian Poli-Dixon, who is coming off a productive sophomore season that included a team-best 10 touchdown catches.

If Bennett settles into his high-profile role comfortably and can get the ball to his talented wideouts, the Bruins should continue to score enough points, even if they don't produce quite as many as they did in '98.

Defense Although the Bruins return nine defensive starters, there will be several changes for the unit, including a switch from last year's 3-4 alignment to the more traditional 4-3.

Up front, junior defensive end Kenyon Coleman is joined by former linebacker Santi Hall on the other side. Two new starters, sophomores Ken Kocher and Anthony Fletcher complete the transformation on the defensive line.

Talented sophomore Ryan Nece leads a linebacking contingent that includes fellow returning starter Tony White and senior Ali Abdul-Azziz. As a group, they should be better than a year ago even without graduated Brendan Ayanbadejo, who came up huge against USC.

The secondary sports four players who started at least six games a year ago, so experience will be an asset for the Bruins when it comes to pass defense. Jason Bell and Ryan Roques are the two seniors in the group, but it's sophomore strong safety Jason Stephens who might be the key to the unit.

This defense, on paper, measures up favorably to last

season's. Hopefully for UCLA, the difference will be even more pronounced on the field.

Special Teams Kicker/punter Chris Sailer has graduated, after handling all of the Bruins' kicking duties for the past three seasons. The derby to replace him at placekicker comes down to redshirt freshman Chris Griffith and prep All-American Nathan Fikse, who made a habit of kicking 50-plus yard field goals in high school. Look for Griffith to be the choice early, with Fikse taking over for good not too far down the road.

Roques is one of the conference's better return men. He averaged 27.2 yards on 14 kickoff returns and 12.7 on punts. His performance in running back kickoffs was the finest by a Bruin in nearly 30 years.

New One to Know That would certainly be Bennett, who is in the unenviable position of immediately following arguably the best quarterback in the history of the school. Thank goodness for good backs and receivers.

Schedule The Bruins will experience both ends of the spectrum back-to-back to open the season, when they host Boise State at the Rose Bowl prior to heading to Columbus to take on highly-touted Ohio State. The Buckeyes, with speedy tailback Michael Wiley back in the fold, figure to put UCLA's run defense to the test. The conference schedule is relatively favorable, with home games against conference favorite Arizona and highly improved California. The USC game is the Coliseum, which is almost like an extra home game for the Bruins.



DANNY FARMER

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Westwood, CA
ENROLLMENT: 34,000
STADIUM: Rose Bowl (92,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 10-2
COACH: Bob Toledo
CAREER: 54-46; **HERE:** 25-10
BOWL: Lost Rose (38-31 to Wisconsin)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Drew Bennett	6-5	210	Jr.
FB	Durell Price*	6-0	225	Sr.
TB	Jermaine Lewis*	5-7	180	Jr.
WR	Danny Farmer*	6-4	210	Sr.
WR	Brian Poli-Dixon	6-5	210	Jr.
TE	Gabe Crecion	6-5	240	Jr.
LT	Blake Worley	6-6	290	Fr.
LG	Oscar Cabrera*	6-4	290	Jr.
C	Troy Danoff	6-4	295	So.
RG	Mike Saffer	6-5	290	Fr.
RT	Brian Polak*	6-4	325	Jr.
K	Nathan Fikse	5-9	180	Fr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Santi Hall*	6-2	250	So.
DT	Ken Kocher	6-4	290	So.
DT	Anthony Fletcher	6-3	290	So.
DE	Kenyon Coleman*	6-5	275	Jr.
OLB	Ryan Nece*	6-2	205	So.
ILB	Tony White*	6-1	235	Jr.
OLB	Ali Abdul-Azziz	6-2	230	Sr.
CB	Ryan Roques*	6-0	180	Sr.
CB	Jason Bell*	6-1	180	Sr.
SS	Audie Attar	6-0	195	Fr.
FS	Jason Stephens*	6-2	195	So.
P	Chris Griffith	6-1	195	Fr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
DeShaun Foster		635	5.5	10	
Jermaine Lewis		503	4.2	11	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Drew Bennett		24	60.0	1	0
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Danny Farmer		58	1,274	22.0	8
Brian Poli-Dixon		44	712	16.2	10
KICKING					
None					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Ryan Nece		76	5 sacks		
Tony White		61	10 for losses		
Ryan Roques		55	4 ints.		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Boise State	—
Sept. 11	at Ohio State	—
Sept. 18	Fresno State	—
Sept. 25	at Stanford	W, 28-24
Oct. 2	at Arizona State	—
Oct. 9	Oregon	W, 41-38
Oct. 16	California	W, 28-16
Oct. 23	at Oregon State	W, 41-34
Oct. 30	Arizona	W, 52-28
Nov. 13	Washington	W, 36-24
Nov. 20	at USC	W, 34-17

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	PAC-10 RANK
Total Offense	1st
Scoring Offense	1st
Total Defense	9th
Scoring Defense	7th

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Seattle, WA
ENROLLMENT: 34,000
STADIUM: Husky Stadium (72,500)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 6-6
COACH: Rick Neuheisel
CAREER: 33-14; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: Lost Oahu (45-25 to Air Force)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 48

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Marques Tuiasosopo	6-2	215	Jr.
FB	Pat Conniff*	6-1	235	Jr.
TB	Willie Hurst*	5-10	200	So.
SE	Gerald Harris*	6-1	190	Jr.
FL	Joe Jarzynka	5-7	175	Sr.
TE	Anthony Mizin	6-4	255	Sr.
HB	Dane Looker*	6-1	190	Sr.
LT	Elliott Silvers*	6-6	300	Jr.
LG	Matt Fraize	6-4	300	Jr.
C	Scott Ask	6-3	270	So.
RG	Chad Ward*	6-5	315	Jr.
RT	Rock Nelson	6-5	290	So.
K	Joe Jarzynka*	5-7	175	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
SLB	Jeremiah Pharms*	6-1	235	Jr.
DT	Mac Tuinea*	6-6	290	Sr.
NT	Jabari Issa*	6-6	295	Sr.
DE	Roger Fagata	6-4	245	Jr.
OLB	Gabe Robinson	6-2	235	Jr.
ILB	Marques Hairston*	6-2	235	Sr.
ILB	Lester Towns*	6-3	240	Sr.
CB	Jermaine Smith*	5-11	195	Sr.
CB	Toure Butler*	5-9	160	Jr.
ROV	Alvin Burleson	6-1	195	Sr.
FS	Hakim Akbar*	6-1	195	So.
P	Ryan Fleming*	6-3	180	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Willie Hurst	538	3.6	4	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Marques Tuiasosopo	484	50.6	2	5
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Dane Looker	64	662	10.3	5
KICKING				
Joe Jarzynka, 6 of 8 FGs (long 44), 19 for 22 PATs				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Lester Towns	63	10 tackles for losses		
Hakim Akbar	59	Led secondary		
Marques Hairston	53	In 10 games		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 9	at Brigham Young	W, 20-10
Sept. 18	Air Force	—
Sept. 25	Colorado	—
Oct. 2	Oregon	L, 22-27
Oct. 9	at Oregon State	W, 35-34
Oct. 16	Arizona State	W, 42-38
Oct. 23	at California	W, 21-13
Oct. 30	Stanford	—
Nov. 6	at Arizona	L, 28-31
Nov. 13	at UCLA	L, 24-36
Nov. 20	Washington State	W, 16-9

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

		PAC-10 RANK
Total Offense	.....	8th
Scoring Offense	.....	7th
Total Defense	.....	7th
Scoring Defense	.....	6th

WASHINGTON

HUSKIES

The 1998 season was not a typical one for the University of Washington, nor was the offseason that came next.

Following a mostly tumultuous tenure for departed coach Jim Lambright, the Huskies made only their third coaching change of the last quarter-century by hiring Rick Neuheisel away from the University of Colorado. Neuheisel brings with him an exemplary record of success during his still-fledgling career as a college head coach, having won 33 of his first 47 games, and he enters a program accustomed to such winning consistency.

This could be a good fit.

Poised behind talented southpaw quarterback Brock Huard, the '98 Huskies were expected to contend for a major bowl berth but limped home instead with break-even marks both overall and in conference play. Huard's last year (as it would turn out) was mostly undistinguished. And Washington failed to mount a serious run at the Roses.

Neuheisel is considered an offensive guru, a player's coach who relates well with his team because, heck, he doesn't look much older than they do, although in reality he turns 38 this year. He believes everyone must earn his berth in the starting lineup, which means competition in the spring and summer was active.

"One of the lessons I've learned in coaching is that competition has to be the crux of it all," he said. "You don't ascend to your position, you win it."

Replacing Huard will be a chore, but the Huskies have a fine candidate in junior Marcus Tuiasosopo, a scrambler-creator who will bring an urgency to the offense that seemed to be lacking under the pure pocket passing of Huard.

Defensively, the Huskies should be much improved as eight starters return from a group that underachieved in '98. Neuheisel will undoubtedly remind them that they fell short of expectations and have an opportunity for redemption.

The '99 Huskies won't be as good as many of their Rose Bowl-winning predecessors, but they'll be better than a year ago.

Offense Tuiasosopo's passing numbers were mediocre—two TDs, five interceptions in limited action—but he should improve with the knowledge that he's the main man... and that a decent ground game and talented receivers are there to help him out.

Senior Dane Looker is among the latter, a reliable receiver who finished third in the Pac-10 in receptions a year ago. Junior Gerald Harris is also expected to mark up his production significantly. Washington always seems strong at tight end, and '99's version is senior Anthony Mizin, a first-year starter who was highly recruited from nearby Aberdeen, Wash.

The ground game features talented sophomore Willie Hurst, who should do significantly better as the prime back than his 3.6 yards per carry suggests. If not, classmate Braxton Cleman will get another opportunity.

The Huskies' Achilles' heel may be an offensive line that returns only two starters, although one of them is all-conference performer Chad Ward. If Washington doesn't control the line of scrimmage, too much will be asked of Tuiasosopo and the Huskies will be forced to win with defense... which they may have to do, anyway.

Defense When was the last time a Washington defense was ranked seventh in the Pac-10? Let's put it this way, it was back far enough that the conference was referred to as the Pac-8. The unit yielded 38 points to Arizona State in the '98 opener, 55 at Nebraska two games later, and more than 30 points four other times including a 45-25 loss to Air Force in the Oahu Bowl.

Of the eight returning starters, the best is nose tackle Jabari Issa. It's not clear whether Neuheisel intends to retain the Huskies' traditional 3-4 alignment, but even if he alters it, Issa will be the main man in the trenches. He compiled eight sacks among his 12 tackles for losses a year ago. Fellow defensive lineman Mac Tuinea is also a force, as are linebackers Jeremiah Pharms, Marques Hairston and Lester Towns.

The loss of graduated Nigel Burton is significant to the secondary, but the Huskies can counter with sophomore Hakim Akbar as well as talented corners Toure Butler and Jermaine Smith.

Washington's defense will be among the conference's top three or four... and it will have to be.

Special Teams Senior Joe Jarzynka is nothing short of amazing. The 5-7 kicker does much more for the Huskies than merely boot the ball between the uprights when called upon. He's also a flanker on offense, and a part-time kick returner. He's probably the most versatile athlete in the conference, and he's just barely bigger than a minute.

Junior Ryan Fleming returns to handle the punts—although Jarzynka can handle that, too, if need be—and the speedy Butler is the primary kick returner, backed up by... you guessed it... Jarzynka.

New One to Know Tuiasosopo has a great deal of pressure on him simply because he takes over as the starting quarterback on a high-profile college team. But he's got the instincts and athleticism to make it work. He'll be fun to watch.

Schedule The opener at Brigham Young will give the Huskies a chance to build on one of their few true successes of '98, a 20-10 triumph at home. Then comes a rematch with Air Force, which embarrassed the Huskies in Hawaii before a national TV audience. The Pac-10 slate includes a road test at California Oct. 23 and a brutal back-to-back set on the road at Arizona and UCLA just prior to the Apple Cup game at home against Washington State.



LESTER TOWNS

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

ARIZONA STATE

SUN DEVILS

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Tempe, AZ
ENROLLMENT: 44,255
STADIUM: Sun Devil Stadium (73,379)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 5-6
COACH: Bruce Snyder
CAREER: 114-94-5; **HERE:** 46-33
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 38

The Sun Devils entered 1998 with so much promise. Talent abounded, especially on offense. So much so, in fact, that it prompted us to pick ASU to win the conference title.

Oops.

Instead, ASU followed up its dream '97 campaign by chomping down on a Saguaro-sized reality pill, finishing at 5-6 and out of the hunt early. The Sun Devils started the season with a heartbreaking 42-38 loss to Washington and never quite recovered, failing to win a game against a winning team all season.

Coach Bruce Snyder still has several remnants of that brilliant '97 squad, however, namely quarterback Ryan Kealy and tailback J.R. Redmond. ASU generally managed a reasonable amount of points a year ago, and should do no worse than duplicate the effort in 1998.

It's on defense where the Sun Devils must be concerned. Viewed as a young but talented unit that would gel quickly going into last season, ASU's defense instead self-destructed. The unit finished eighth in the Pac-10 in both points and yardage allowed. Even as the offense did its best to offset the porous defense by pacing the conference in time of possession, the defeats mounted.

Still, ASU has to be optimistic with eight starters returning. It's a relatively smallish group that relies on outrunning opposing attacks.

If the negative experience of '98 on defense can be built upon, rather than dug up, and if Redmond can emerge as the Heisman Trophy candidate he was plugged as two years ago, ASU should rebound well from last year's disappointing performance.

Offense Kealy enjoyed a very respectable junior season, passing for more than 2,100 yards in his 10 starts and accounting for more than twice as many touchdowns (19) compared to picks (9). He'll go into the season as the clear No. 1, which should allow him to relax and settle in to the season more easily.

ASU's receiving corps is mostly untested, although junior Tariq McDonald has demonstrated flashes of big-play potential. Returning tight end Kendrick Bates started six games in '98.

Redmond battled numerous minor injuries to amass 883 yards last year. Snyder literally hopes for twice that amount and intends to focus the offense to that end. The offensive line will miss All-Conference center Grey Ruegamer but is solid on the left side with returning starters Scott Peters and Marvel Smith.

Defense The leaders of the 'D' are senior corner Courtney Jackson and junior linebacker Adam Archuleta, the team's leading returning tackler.

The Sun Devils weren't terrible in any aspect of their play a year ago, but neither did they excel in any department, ranking in the lower half of the conference in virtually every major defensive category.

ASU expects to be better up front, with the experience of senior tackles Ryan Reilly and Junior Ioane expected to yield dividends in the form of tackles behind the line of scrimmage.

Junior linebacker Adam Archuleta may be somewhat small in stature (6-0, 208), but the guy makes plays. He was second on the team with 75 tackles last

season, including five sacks and 18 tackles for loss. Rejoining him at linebacker will be sophomore Eric Fields (42 tackles in 1998) in the middle and junior Stephen Trejo, whose sprained knee shortened his 1998 campaign, at the other outside linebacker spot.

Special Teams It appears that Redmond will return kicks in addition to his running back chores, with Snyder searching for ways to exploit Redmond's big-play ability. Sophomore Stephen Baker will again handle both the punting and place-kicking duties. He was erratic with the latter as a freshman but is expected to show significant improvement.

New Ones to Know McDonald and sophomore Justin Taplin must come through with enough big plays to take the pressure off not only Kealy, but Redmond as well. If not, the suspect defense—even with a year's additional experience—likely won't be able to fulfill more than its own share of the burden.

Schedule It's a positive for a team coming off a disappointing season to open with two home games. Texas Tech will offer a tough test for the Sun Devils with All-American candidate Ricky Williams leading its running game.

The Pac-10 opener at Cal will be a severe test, and the slate gets no easier with a home game against UCLA preceding back-to-back road contests at Washington and Notre Dame. If ASU can head into the final month no worse than 4-4, it can shoot legitimately for a bowl berth.



J.R. REDMOND

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Ryan Kealy*	6-2	205	Jr.
TB	J.R. Redmond	6-0	210	Sr.
FB	Jake Each	6-1	235	So.
WR	Justin Taplin	6-0	180	So.
WR	Tariq McDonald	6-1	180	Jr.
TE	Kendrick Bates	6-6	235	Sr.
LT	Marvel Smith*	6-6	300	Jr.
LG	Scott Peters*	6-3	295	So.
C	Victor Leyva	6-4	300	Jr.
RG	Jeff Johannesen	6-5	295	Sr.
RT	Thomas Schmidt	6-6	305	Sr.
K	Stephen Baker	5-11	185	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Erik Flowers*	6-4	240	Sr.
DT	Junior Ioane*	6-4	310	Sr.
DT	Ryan Reilly*	6-2	270	Sr.
DE	Quincy Yancy	6-8	245	Jr.
OLB	Adam Archuleta*	6-0	210	Jr.
MLB	Cody Price	6-3	230	So.
OLB	Eric Fields*	6-3	220	So.
CB	J'Juan Cherry*	6-0	205	Sr.
CB	Courtney Jackson*	6-1	190	Sr.
SS	Willie Daniel*	6-0	210	So.
FS	Courtney Palmore	5-11	185	So.
P	Stephen Baker	5-11	185	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
J.R. Redmond		883	5.3	11
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD INT
Ryan Kealy		2,161	57.5	19 9
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG TD
Tariq McDonald		36	480	13.3 3

KICKING
 Stephen Baker, 10 of 17 FGs (long 44), 5 for 7 PATs

DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC
Adam Archuleta		75	5 sacks
J'Juan Cherry		54	3rd on team

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Texas Tech	—
Sept. 18	New Mexico State	—
Sept. 25	at California	W, 55-22
Oct. 2	UCLA	—
Oct. 9	at Notre Dame	L, 9-28
Oct. 16	at Washington	L, 38-42
Oct. 23	Washington State	W, 38-28
Oct. 30	at Oregon	L, 19-51
Nov. 6	at USC	L, 24-35
Nov. 13	Stanford	W, 44-38
Nov. 27	Arizona	L, 42-50

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

		PAC-10 RANK
Total Offense	.....	4th
Scoring Offense	.....	4th
Total Defense	.....	8th
Scoring Defense	.....	8th

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Berkeley, CA
ENROLLMENT: 30,000
STADIUM: Memorial Stadium (75,028)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 5-6
COACH: Tom Holmoe
CAREER: 8-14; **HERE:** 8-14
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

CALIFORNIA

GOLDEN BEARS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
QB	Samuel Clemons	6-2	210	So.	
FB	Joshua White*	5-11	250	Sr.	
RB	Marcus Fields*	6-2	210	Jr.	
WR	Phillip Pipersburg	5-10	185	Jr.	
WR	Joel Young*	6-2	185	Sr.	
TE	Brian Surgener*	6-4	225	Jr.	
LT	Reid Diehl	6-4	290	Jr.	
LG	Brandon Ludwig*	6-4	290	So.	
C	John Romero*	6-3	310	Sr.	
RG	Kevin Doherty	6-5	295	Sr.	
RT	Langston Walker*	6-8	335	So.	
K	Ignacio Brache*	6-0	210	Sr.	

DEFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
DE	Mawuko Tugbenyoh	6-1	245	Sr.	
DT	Jerry DeLoach*	6-4	310	Sr.	
NT	Jacob Waasdorp*	6-2	270	Jr.	
DE	Andre Carter*	6-4	250	Jr.	
OLB	Sekou Sanyika*	6-4	235	Sr.	
ILB	Keith Miller	6-2	240	Sr.	
ILB	Matt Beck*	6-4	230	Sr.	
CB	Chidi Iwuoma*	5-9	185	Jr.	
CB	Deltha O'Neal	5-11	195	Sr.	
SS	Damian Marzett	6-0	210	Sr.	
FS	Pete Destefano*	6-2	215	Sr.	
P	Nick Harris*	6-3	215	Jr.	

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Marcus Fields	734	4.5	4

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Samuel Clemons	2	16.7	0	0

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Joel Young	28	281	10.0	1

KICKING	YDS	PCT	TD
Ignacio Brache, 5 of 9 FGs (long 45), 10 for 13 PATs			

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Pete Destefano	66	2nd on team
Matt Beck	64	5 sacks
Sekou Sanyika	55	23 for losses

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Rutgers	—
Sept. 11	at Nebraska	L, 3-24
Sept. 25	Arizona State	L, 22-55
Oct. 2	at Washington State	W, 24-14
Oct. 9	at Brigham Young	—
Oct. 16	at UCLA	L, 16-28
Oct. 23	Washington	L, 13-21
Oct. 30	USC	W, 32-31
Nov. 6	at Oregon State	W, 20-19
Nov. 13	Oregon	—
Nov. 20	at Stanford	L, 3-10

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	PAC-10 RANK
Total Offense	10th
Scoring Offense	10th
Total Defense	3rd
Scoring Defense	3rd

If, indeed, championships are won with defense, then the California Golden Bears are sitting pretty entering the 1999 season.

But in reality, it takes some offense as well in a conference as rugged as the Pac-10. Thus, the latter is likely to prevent the former from leading the Bears to new heights. Still, Cal should be improved over last season's 5-6 showing.

Actually, the 1998 season could have been much sweeter for the Golden Bears, who got out of the blocks with four wins in their first five games including an important conference road victory at USC. But they won only once thereafter and posted an ugly 0-3 mark in home conference games.

Cal's defense may be the Pac-10's finest. There are at least two bonafide all-conference candidates on defense for the Bears, perhaps as many as four. That bodes especially well during a season in which it looks as if conference-wide offensive prowess will be down from recent seasons.

Included in the likely struggle for points, however, is Cal's inexperienced offense. The pass-catch tandem of Justin Vedder and Dameane Douglas that worked so well for the Bears for the last three years is history. A bright spot, however, is the return of leading ballcarrier Marcus Fields, who legitimately could and should eclipse the 1,000-yard barrier. Senior center John Romero anchors a decent offensive line to lead the way for Fields.

The Golden Bears will break in a new quarterback, which rarely translates into major bowl bids for any program, let alone one that hasn't qualified for the Rose Bowl since well before the Berkeley campus was a site of student Vietnam war protests.

The Bears could sneak up on unsuspecting foes, however, and notch a couple of unexpected triumphs before the rest of the conference gets savvy to Cal's threat. If that occurs, the Bears could slide into a Bowl game.

Offense Cal's choices are few to take over at quarterback for Vedder. Sophomore Samuel Clemons appears to be the frontrunner, but he's no Mark Twain in the world of team leaders, having thrown all of a dozen career passes. If he's not up to the assignment, redshirt freshman David Page is likely to get the call.

To make matters more stressful for third-year head coach Tom Holmoe is the squad's inexperience at receiver. Senior Joel Young was a part-time starter a year ago, and sophomore Ronnie Davenport is promising. But again, all are mostly unproven in prime roles.

Fields ran for more than 700 yards last season and will work behind a mostly experienced offensive line that not only includes Romero but also includes returning starters Brandon Ludwig and Langston Walker.

With this assortment of personnel to work with, it's likely that Holmoe will emphasize ball control and let his shining defense carry the team, at least early on in the campaign.

Defense The Bears were third in the Pac-10 in total defense last season, and just about everyone of consequence is back for another go. The co-leaders of the talented group are senior linebackers Matt Beck and Sekou Sanyika, each of whom make a

bear's share of big plays. Cal's 125 tackles for losses paced the conference last season.

And then there's steady Pete Destefano, the free safety and top returning tackler. Two others, senior defensive tackle Jerry DeLoach and junior defensive end Andre Carter, may again garner all-conference consideration after qualifying for the second team in '98.

Overall, it is a deep and experienced group with a lot of pressure thrust upon it to shut down the opposition on a consistent basis.

Special Teams One of the more exciting players in the conference is kick returner Deltha O'Neal, a senior who will also be playing a significant role in the secondary for the Bears. O'Neal was third in the conference in punt return average and fourth in kickoffs a year ago. Junior punter Nick Harris and senior kicker Ignacio Brache are both solid. Harris earned all-conference honorable mention in '98. The Bears will need to improve their punt coverage after finishing last in the conference in that category.

New One to Know Clemons will be under the microscope from the get-go because the Bears realize their defense can carry them to a lofty level if the offense can be merely adequate. At 6-2 and 210 pounds, Clemons is a strong passer reminiscent of Mike Pawlawski, a former Pac-10 Player of the Year in the early '90s.

Schedule The nonconference slate includes a trip to Lincoln, Neb. to face the Cornhuskers and Cal will also venture to Provo, Utah to face Brigham Young. The toughest portion of the slate comes in a three-week road trip during which the Bears face Washington State and UCLA sandwiched around BYU. The Bears get a break, however, in that they don't face conference favorite Arizona and play host to contenders Washington and USC back-to-back following the road trip.



PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

OREGON

DUCKS

In the recent past, the Oregon Ducks have enjoyed success primarily behind a first-rate offensive attack that made a habit of outscoring opponents behind the sterling play of quarterback Akili Smith.

But Smith has gone on to a whole new tax bracket, and instead it will be defense that Ducks coach Mike Bellotti will rely on to keep his team in the Pac-10's upper crust. And Oregon should have a pretty good one, returning eight starters from a squad that ranked a respectable fifth in the conference in total defense a year ago.

"This may be the most experienced team we've fielded since I've been here," said Bellotti, who came to the program in 1995.

Included in the core group of experience on defense is a trio of stalwart linebackers as well as a secondary that returns three solid regulars. Overall, however, it's a team sans any true stars. Our preseason All-Pac 10 first team includes only All-American candidate placekicker Nathan Villegas from the Ducks.

The all-conference second team will probably be littered with Oregonians, however. With the exception of Smith, that's how the Ducks have gone about their business in recent seasons.

The departure of Smith doesn't mean a reduction in ambition, however. Bellotti, even without an experienced quarterback and with a suspect offensive line, continues to talk about taking the Ducks to a level beyond merely good.

Oregon's 39-21 mark the last five seasons is tops in the conference.

"The first thing is to stay hungry," Bellotti said. "It's not enough to be the winningest team, but to win conference championships. The more people buy into that, the better we'll be."

Offense The process of replacing Smith could be a lengthy one with a cast of candidates that collectively have thrown one Division I pass.

The frontrunner appears to be A.J. Feeley, a 6-4 junior with an above-average arm. In close pursuit for the starter's job is sophomore Joey Harrington, also 6-4 but perhaps more mobile than his rival. Bellotti has planned on going with a dual-quarterback system, but much of that depends on which quarterback (if either) steps up to take the role by the, er, feathers.

The Ducks are deep at running back with steady Derien Latimer battling for carries with fellow senior Reuben Droughns. Droughns rushed for more than 800 yards in only five games. If he can stay healthy, he should eclipse the 1,000-yard barrier even in a limited role.

Oregon's offensive line must be rebuilt—only the right contingent of guard Deke Moens and Josh Beckett have been starters for more than a season. Another senior, tackle Scott Fergus, was a part-time starter in 1998.

Senior flanker Tony Hartley was one of the more exciting players in the conference last season but was listed fifth on the spring depth chart by the Ducks, reportedly for undisclosed disciplinary reasons. If he is not the man at season's beginning, Bellotti will likely go with junior Ray Brust opposite sophomore split end Bobby Nero.

Defense Linebacker Aaron Cheuvront is as smooth as his last name in the midst of an aggressive defense, while experienced Peter Sirmon and Dietrich Moore appear to have been supplanted by sophomore Tim Shear and senior Nathan Naggi, respectively.

The secondary's returning trio is made up of seniors Michael Fletcher and Brandon McEmore as well as junior Rashad Bauman. Fletcher plays more like a linebacker, while McEmore and Bauman head an aerial defense that had only 10 interceptions last season.

Up front, seniors Terry Miller and Caleb Smith are

solid, and junior Saul Patu is a monster on the pass rush but needs to improve his run defense.

On paper, only California's defense appears better.

Special Teams Villegas is the conference's top kicker, and one of the best in the country. He nailed 20 of 22 field goal tries, including a perfect 6 for 6 from 40-49 yards out, and was flawless on 54 PAT attempts. Fletcher is the kick return specialist, posting solid numbers of 11.6 yards per punt return and 20.5 on kickoffs. He took two punts the distance. JUCO transfer Kurtis Doerr is expected to win a wide-open competition for the punting duties.

New One to Know No mystery here. It's whomever emerges as the starting quarterback. With Smith gone, Bellotti is expected to rely significantly more on the running game. But either Feeley or Carrington will be have to be at least moderately successful in order for Droughns and Latimer to have room to run behind a reconstructed offensive line.

Schedule The Ducks have a team, again on that dreaded paper, which could again win enough to gain a bowl berth. But the schedule is nothing short of brutal. Oregon is likely to be 2-1 or perhaps even 3-0 going into conference play but they open at home against USC before playing consecutive road games at Washington, UCLA and Arizona. If they emerge from that stretch with a winning record overall, they could do better than 5-6. But we don't think they will—not without a trenches-tested quarterback, anyway.



NATHAN VILLEGAS

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-6

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Eugene, OR
ENROLLMENT: 17,500
STADIUM: Autzen Stadium (41,698)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 8-4
COACH: Mike Bellotti
CAREER: 53-42-2; **HERE:** 30-17
BOWL: Lost Aloha (51-43 to Colorado)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 47

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	A.J. Feeley	6-4	220	Jr.
FB	Chris Young*	6-0	220	Sr.
TB	Derien Latimer	5-11	220	Sr.
FL	Ray Brust	6-3	210	Jr.
SE	Bobby Nero	6-1	180	So.
TE	Danny Pulido	6-5	235	So.
LT	Scott Fergus*	6-7	290	Sr.
LG	Jim Adams	6-4	270	So.
C	Ryan Schmid	6-4	270	So.
RG	Deke Moen*	6-4	280	Sr.
RT	Josh Beckett*	6-5	315	Sr.
K	Nathan Villegas*	5-9	165	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Terry Miller*	6-3	250	Sr.
DT	Caleb Smith*	6-5	280	Sr.
DT	Zack Freiter	6-3	265	So.
DE	Saul Patu*	6-3	260	Jr.
LB	Tim Shear	6-2	230	So.
LB	Aaron Cheuvront*	6-2	240	Sr.
LB	Nathan Naggi	6-4	220	Sr.
CB	Tamoni Joiner	5-10	185	Jr.
CB	Rashad Bauman*	5-8	180	Jr.
ROV	Michael Fletcher*	5-10	200	Sr.
FS	Brandon McEmore*	6-3	205	Sr.
P	Kurtis Doerr	6-2	215	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Rueben Droughns		844	7.4	9
Derien Latimer		325	3.4	5
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD
None				
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG
Tony Hartley		48	1,015	21.1
Bobby Nero		10	137	13.7
KICKING				
Nathan Villegas, 20 of 22 FGs (long 49), 57 of 57 PATs				
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC	
Aaron Cheuvront		81	8 for losses	
Dietrich Moore		81	78-yd. INT return for TD	
Michael Fletcher		76	52 unassisted	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Michigan State	W, 48-14
Sept. 11	UTEP	W, 33-26
Sept. 18	Nevada	—
Sept. 25	USC	W, 17-13
Oct. 2	at Washington	W, 27-22
Oct. 9	at UCLA	L, 38-41
Oct. 23	at Arizona	L, 3-38
Oct. 30	Arizona State	W, 51-19
Nov. 6	Washington State	W, 51-29
Nov. 13	at California	—
Nov. 20	Oregon State	L, 41-44

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	PAC-10 RANK
Total Offense	2nd
Scoring Offense	2nd
Total Defense	5th
Scoring Defense	4th

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Palo Alto, CA
ENROLLMENT: 13,075
STADIUM: Stanford Stadium (85,500)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Tyrone Willingham
CAREER: 22-23-1; **HERE:** 22-23-1
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 46

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Todd Husak*	6-3	210	Jr.
FB	Maxwell Stevenson*	5-11	240	Sr.
RB	Coy Wire*	6-0	215	Jr.
WR	Troy Walters*	5-8	170	Sr.
WR	DeRonnie Pitts*	5-11	195	Sr.
TE	Russell Stewart*	6-5	245	Sr.
LT	Jeff Cronshagen*	6-7	300	Sr.
LG	Joe Fairchild*	6-6	300	Sr.
C	Mike McLaughlin*	6-4	305	Sr.
RG	Eric Heitmann	6-5	285	So.
RT	Ben Garrison	6-8	275	Jr.
K	Mike Biselli	5-10	175	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Sam Benner*	6-5	270	Sr.
DT	Willie Howard*	6-4	290	Sr.
NT	Andrew Currie*	6-4	270	Sr.
DE	Austin Lee	6-3	240	Jr.
OLB	Riall Johnson	6-3	240	Sr.
ILB	Sharcus Steen*	6-1	235	Sr.
ILB	Marc Stockbauer*	6-3	235	Sr.
CB	Chris Johnson*	5-11	185	Sr.
CB	Ruben Carter*	5-8	170	Jr.
SS	Aaron Focht*	5-10	190	Sr.
FS	Tim Smith*	6-4	230	Sr.
P	Sean Tolpinrud	6-2	190	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Coy Wire	316	3.5	3	
Juan Carlos-Lacey	288	3.8	2	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Todd Husak	3,092	52.1	17	7
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
DeRonnie Pitts	74	1,012	13.7	7
Troy Walters	52	880	16.9	5
Dave Davis	48	707	14.7	6
KICKING				
None				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Tim Smith	103	6 INTS		
Marc Stockbauer	93	3 sacks		
Sharcus Steen	49	8 for losses		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Texas	—
Sept. 11	Washington State	—
Sept. 18	at Arizona	L, 31-14
Sept. 25	UCLA	L, 24-28
Oct. 2	San Jose State	L, 23-35
Oct. 16	Oregon State	L, 23-30
Oct. 23	at USC	L, 9-34
Oct. 30	at Washington	—
Nov. 13	at Arizona State	L, 38-44
Nov. 20	California	W, 10-3
Nov. 27	Notre Dame	L, 17-35

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	PAC-10 RANK
Total Offense	5th
Scoring Offense	8th
Total Defense	10th
Scoring Defense	10th

STANFORD

CARDINAL

Growing pains. Children endure them, teens create them... And college football teams like Stanford in 1998 experience them. The Cardinal football squad of last season was a conglomerate of freshmen and sophomores, thrust into key roles long before they were truly ready.

Now it's 1999, a year later, and suddenly many of those same greenhorns can now be considered seasoned veterans. Quarterback Todd Husak is one of the best returning signalcallers in the conference. Flanker Troy Walters and wideout DeRonnie Pitts are as explosive as any pass-catching tandem in the conference.

And the Cardinal returns nine defensive starters to go with all that skill-position depth on offense. So should Stanford seriously contend for the conference crown? Well, not so fast.

The Cardinal is coming off a 3-8 campaign, its second straight losing season, and won just two of eight conference games. The good news, however, is that it began Pac-10 play 0-6 before defeating Washington State and rival California to close out the campaign on a positive note.

Coach Tyrone Willingham doesn't seem to lack for talent on his club. But clearly, it will have to play much better and more consistently than in 1998.

"We have some obvious concerns," Willingham said, "but we also have some areas on our team that we feel very good about. A lot of our players received important game experience last season and it is our job as a coaching staff to bring them along to the next level and to continue to improve as a team."

Offense Husak was a pleasant surprise in '98, throwing for more than 3,000 yards in his first full season at the helm. But part of that production was a by-product of Stanford's inability to stop the opposition. The Cardinal would often fall behind in games to the point that passing attack was the only way to remain close enough for a chance at winning late. All too often, that didn't occur.

Walters and Pitts could reach 2,000 yards combined, if both stay healthy. But Stanford won't have to depend on the pass as much this year, because the offensive line returns virtually intact and running back Coy Wire will be the main man in the backfield from the get-go. He missed the final five games of last season but still finished as the squad's leading rusher and receiver out of the backfield. Maxwell Stevenson and Emory Brock should each see plenty of playing time at fullback. The Stanford rushing game was downright awful in '98, averaging 75 yards a game, but the extra year of experience could be key.

Defense Experience is a good thing, of course, but Willingham is only cautiously optimistic after his Cardinal defense finished last in the Pac-10 in both scoring defense (more than 33 points yielded per game) and total defense.

The leaders of the group will be second-year starting linebackers Sharcus Steen and Mark Stockbauer, two of the team's top three tacklers a year ago. In the secondary, experienced and talented Tim Smith anchors a group in which all four starters return for another go. Smith paced the squad with six interceptions.

Stanford's lineup in front is what caused many of the defensive problems a year ago. Three starters within that group return—Sam Benner, Willie Howard and Andrew Currie—but any or even all three could be supplanted if the play isn't stepped up.

Special Teams Walters entered 1998 as the premier punt returner in the conference, but he averaged just 6.7 yards per return without a touchdown and was replaced by Pitts. It's unclear whether Walters will reclaim the role, but he's clearly the most qualified for it.

The Stanford kicking game is totally unproven, with junior punter Sean Tolpinrud and junior kicker Mike Biselli each lobbying for their first shots at the big time. Tolpinrud will definitely do the punting, and may end up with the kicking duties as well.

The Cardinal's coverage units ranked a cumulative ninth last season, so that will be another area of concern for Willingham.

New One to Know Junior defensive end Austin Lee is the newcomer to the front four and, thus, he'll have some pressure on him immediately to help upgrade the unit from a subpar '98 performance. Lee's presence as a run defender will probably outweigh the importance of getting to the quarterback, because opponents were so effective at controlling the ball and the clock against Stanford last season.

Schedule The Cardinal's nonleague slate is demanding—it opens at Texas and concludes the year Thanksgiving weekend against Notre Dame at home. The Pac-10 schedule is also difficult, with road tests at Arizona, USC, Washington and Arizona State. UCLA and Cal come to Palo Alto, along with Oregon State. There are no gimmes in the bunch, including an Oct. 2 date with perennial foe San Jose State.

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7



RUSSELL STEWART

WASHINGTON STATE

COUGARS

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Pullman, WA
ENROLLMENT: 20,500
STADIUM: Martin Stadium (37,600)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Mike Price
CAREER: 102-101; **HERE:** 56-57
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 46

There are a lot of reasons to believe that Washington State football will struggle for the second consecutive season following the graduation of quarterback Ryan Leaf in '98, but head coach Mike Price will have none of it.

"You wouldn't be able to tell we had a losing season last year. This team has a tremendous attitude," Price said. "I'm just as excited about this (team) as any I've ever coached."

The Cougars followed up their Rose Bowl season of 1997 by getting positively pulverized in '98. After blowing out of the blocks with three victories over significantly inferior non-conference opponents, WSU went on to drop all eight of its Pac-10 games, all but the season finale against archrival Washington decided by at least 10 points in the wrong direction.

It was a team made up almost exclusively of underclassmen—not only did Leaf depart after the successful '97 campaign but so, too, did 16 other prominent players.

Year 2 of the rebuilding phase is certainly more promising. On offense, running back Kevin Brown and flanker Nian Taylor both could get national attention for talents. And quarterback Steve Birnbaum will definitely be better than his first-year-as-a-starter performance.

On defense, Washington State never has been a pushover, although a few games got away from them last season. Interestingly, the Cougars finished a solid fourth in the Pac-10 in total defense yet only Stanford allowed more than WSU's 31.7 points a game.

Price obviously believes he can build on the former stat by discarding the latter as a product of youth.

"Our football team as a whole should be much better. We hope to get back to the level where we think we belong," Price said.

Offense Brown is coming off a season during which he set a school sophomore record with 1,046 rushing yards. Taylor averaged a hefty 18.8 yards per catch in '98 as the primary deep threat for Coach Price's offense.

But while those two should again flourish, the questions surround the quarterback slot. Steve Birnbaum is the favorite to retain his starting slot, but after putting up woeful passing numbers—only 48.5 pass attempts completed and 11 interceptions compared to a half-dozen touchdowns—his slot is not assured. In fact, Price is encouraging a quarterback competition among Birnbaum and two other hopefuls with the idea that one may rise significantly above the other two.

The other two candidates are junior Paul Mencke and redshirt freshman Jason Gesser. "We're going to give those three equal opportunities and see if one guy will pull away from the other two," Price confirmed.

Up front, the Cougars return experience along about half the offensive line. Senior tackle Ryan Tujague is solid, as is center L. Walden-Schultz. WSU also sports the beefy Raymond brothers, Reed and Ryan, each of whom stand at 6-7 and 300 pounds and will occupy the right side of the line.

Defense The Cougars' best player is junior safety Lamont Thompson, and secondary co-members Chris Martin and Earl Riley are also first-rate, which puts Washington State potentially among the Pac-10 elite in pass defense.

The nucleus in the middle consists of linebackers Steve Gleason and Brad Philley, the two sandwiching active middle linebacker Tupu Tuupo. Washington State's defensive line is experienced on the weak side with end Jesse Ratcliff and tackle Rob Meier. Overall it's a smallish group, though, with Meier the heavy-weight at 265 pounds.

When WSU went to the Rose Bowl following the '97 season, its defense was as responsible for the success as anything the Leaf-led offense accomplished. This defense must reach even loftier heights for the '99 Cougars to experience similar success.

Special Teams The Cougars are as good and deep as anyone in the conference. Taylor is potentially explosive returning kicks, although Price might opt for Thompson on punt. Senior Rian Lindell is a talented kicker although he must make more than eight of 17 field goal tries this time around, while senior Kareem Anderson trails only Arizona State's Stephen Baker among returning punters.

New One to Know It's hard to imagine the Cougars doing significantly better on offense with Birnbaum remaining at the helm, and it's difficult to picture a redshirt freshman at the controls as well. That means Mencke may be the key to a rejuvenated passing game. If it happens, Brown can come up big on the ground and the Cougars can ascend the Pac-10 standings in chunks.

Schedule The nonconference slate is again mostly beatable. Utah in the opener will be a good test, but Idaho, SW Louisiana and Hawaii should also result in 'W's for the Cougars. The conference slate ain't bad, either, with Arizona, Cal and USC coming to Pullman, Wash. Road trips to Arizona State, Oregon and rival Washington pose the most demanding contests outside of the home game with the Wildcats.



LAMONT THOMPSON

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-7

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Steve Birnbaum*	6-5	215	Sr.
SB	Leaford Hackett	5-9	175	Sr.
RB	Kevin Brown*	6-2	220	Jr.
FL	Nian Taylor*	6-2	195	Sr.
SE	Jerry Roquemore*	5-11	180	Sr.
TE	Corey Scott	6-3	250	Sr.
LT	Ryan Tujague*	6-6	295	Sr.
LG	Joe Criscione	6-3	295	Sr.
C	L. Walden-Schultz*	6-4	275	Sr.
RG	Ryan Raymond	6-7	305	Jr.
RT	Reed Raymond*	6-8	300	Jr.
K	Rian Lindell*	6-3	240	Sr.
PK	Brian Kopka*	5-7	166	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Jesse Ratcliff*	6-2	260	Sr.
DT	Rob Meier*	6-6	265	Sr.
DT	Joey Hollenbeck	6-4	265	So.
DE	Mark Hedeon	6-6	250	So.
OLB	Steve Gleason*	5-11	210	Sr.
MLB	Tupu Tuupo	6-2	245	So.
OLB	Brad Philley*	6-2	210	Jr.
CB	Chris Martin*	5-11	185	Sr.
CB	LeJuan Gibbons	5-10	170	Sr.
SS	Earl Riley*	6-2	210	Sr.
FS	Lamont Thompson*	6-2	215	Jr.
P	Kareem Anderson*	5-11	190	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Kevin Brown		1,046	4.9	4
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD
Steve Birnbaum		1,677	48.5	6
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG
Leaf Hackett		54	680	12.6
Nian Taylor		45	847	18.8
KICKING		Rian Lindell, 8 of 17 FGS (long 40), 25 for 25 PATs		
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC	
James Price		83	55 unassisted	
Steve Gleason		70	4 sacks	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Utah	—
Sept. 11	at Stanford	L, 28-38
Sept. 18	Idaho	W, 24-16
Sept. 25	Arizona	L, 7-41
Oct. 2	California	L, 14-24
Oct. 9	SW Louisiana	—
Oct. 23	at Arizona State	L, 28-38
Oct. 30	Oregon State	—
Nov. 6	at Oregon	L, 29-51
Nov. 13	USC	L, 14-42
Nov. 20	at Washington	L, 9-16
Nov. 27	at Hawaii	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	PAC-10 RANK
Total Offense	6th
Scoring Offense	9th
Total Defense	4th
Scoring Defense	9th

Pacific-10 Conference

LOCATION: Corvallis, OR
ENROLLMENT: 15,000
STADIUM: Parker Stadium (35,362)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 5-6
COACH: Dennis Erickson
CAREER: 113-40-1; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 42

OREGON STATE

BEAVERS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Terence Bryant	6-2	205	Sr.
FB	Isaac White	6-1	220	Sr.
TB	Ken Simonton*	5-7	180	So.
FL	Robert Prescott	5-11	180	Jr.
SE	Roddy Tompkins*	6-0	200	Sr.
TE	Martin Maurer	6-4	230	So.
LT	Jason White*	6-5	315	Sr.
LG	Jared Cornell	6-3	320	Jr.
C	Keith DiDomenico*	6-5	310	Jr.
RG	Aaron Koch*	6-3	295	Sr.
RT	Vincent Sandoval	6-4	285	So.
K	Mike Fessler	5-10	205	Jr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Toalei Talataina	6-2	235	Sr.
DT	Aaron Wells*	6-0	245	Sr.
NG	Shawn Ball*	6-0	275	Sr.
DE	Sefa O'Reilly	6-1	235	Jr.
OLB	Micah Moore	5-10	210	Sr.
MLB	Jonathan Jackson*	6-2	240	Sr.
OLB	James Allen	6-1	205	So.
CB	Ricky Walker	5-11	175	Jr.
CB	Keith Heyward-Johnson*	5-11	185	Jr.
SS	Calvin Carlyle	5-11	190	So.
FS	Terrence Carroll*	6-0	215	Jr.
P	Mike Fessler*	5-10	205	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Ken Simonton		1,028	4.6	13	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Terence Bryant		1,362	50.0	4	3
Jonathan Smith		1,427	44.8	6	5
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Roddy Tompkins		29	431	14.9	2
KICKING					
None					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Jonathan Jackson		114	2nd in Pac-10		
Terrence Carroll		55	led secondary		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Nevada	W, 48-6
Sept. 11	Fresno State	—
Sept. 18	Georgia Southern	—
Oct. 2	at USC	L, 20-40
Oct. 9	Washington	L, 34-35
Oct. 16	at Stanford	W, 30-23
Oct. 23	UCLA	L, 34-41
Oct. 30	at Washington State	—
Nov. 6	California	L, 19-29
Nov. 13	Arizona	L, 7-28
Nov. 20	at Oregon	W, 44-41

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	PAC-10 RANK
Total Offense	7th
Scoring Offense	6th
Total Defense	6th
Scoring Defense	5th

What do you get when you put one of the college game's best coaches and insert him into a program with one of the worst traditions in Division I?

Optimism.

Dennis Erickson, the engineer of a national championship at the University of Miami (Fla.) before engaging in a mostly uneventful run as an NFL head coach, signed a 5-year contract to run the Beavers program. It's Erickson's second tour of duty in the Pacific Northwest and within the Pac-10. He coached at Washington State from 1987-89, winning the 1988 Aloha Bowl.

OSU has been plagued as the conference doormat for decades, so much so that last season's 5-6 performance (2-6 in the Pac-10) was viewed as strides in the right direction.

The obvious problem for the Beavers compared to the rest of the Pac-10 is recruiting, a dilemma that the hiring of Erickson should neutralize to a certain extent. Still, the new coach will have pressure to show immediate results. And there's a lot of questions surrounding whether or not he has the right players to take the next step.

It is expected that Erickson will revert the Beavers back into a traditional pro-style offense, and he has two quarterbacking candidates that each threw for more than 1,000 yards last year—seniors Jonathan Smith and Terrance Bryant. Erickson also has a tailback, sophomore Ken Simonton, who was among the best freshmen talents in the conference last season.

But Oregon State figures to be thin on the offensive front, even thinner on the defensive front, and void of any legitimate experience anywhere else. Plainly, the Beavers should have gotten a bit more out of last year's group and probably should start anew under Erickson.

Erickson's only losing season in his college career was his first at Washington State, in '87. His first at Oregon State is likely to be similar.

Offense Simonton had 1,028 yards a year ago to go with 13 touchdowns. But he was running back then behind a relatively experienced offensive line. This year's O-line will be half brand new. Still, tackle Jason White, center Keith DiDomenico and guard Aaron Koch are all seasoned, DiDomenico a junior and the other two seniors.

Bryant and Smith are serviceable at quarterback, and figure to become more than that under Erickson's wing. Bryant has the edge at retaining his starting berth, but could be unseated during fall practices or early in the regular season.

An unheralded talent is senior split end Roddy Tompkins, who garnered 29 receptions a year ago playing

behind three seniors with inferior skills. This year, he gets his chance to shine.

Oregon State's offense will score more than it's accustomed to, but 2000 looks like the true beginning to something special.

Defense The one good thing about being forced to rely on unproven players is that there's always the chance that one or more will turn out to be better than expected.

Oregon State returns five starters on defense—two on the line, two in the secondary and one between. Middle linebacker Jonathan Jackson is a Grade-A playmaker, a total athlete with a chance for national recognition. The other returners, however, are longer on experience that actual prodigiousness. Noseguard Shawn Ball and defensive tackle Aaron Wells did enough to hold their slots, but weren't statistically spectacular.

Junior free safety Terrence Carroll is a quick athlete who's not afraid to make tackles. His leadership in a secondary with one other returner, K. Heyward-Johnson, is imperative.

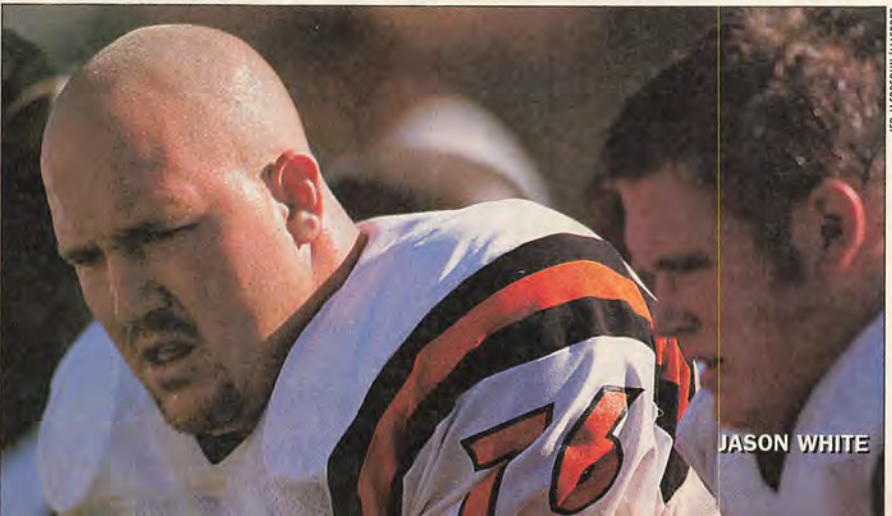
In a conference as potentially explosive offensively as the Pac-10, the Beavers aren't likely to be able to dam the river of points that will flood its defense. Not yet, anyway.

Special Teams Junior punter Mike Fessler was much improved last season and is entrenched in that role. Erickson will have to find a kicking replacement for the graduated Jose Cortez. Simonton has experience returning kicks and has the speed to break some, but his value to the offense may supersede that role. Look for Tompkins to take up some of the slack.

New One to Know Junior Robert Prescott, who also might get pushed into kick return chores, is blinding fast and should earn a spot in the starting offense as the slotback. He may end up with several big plays on his resume before the season is concluded.

Schedule The Beavers should emerge from their three nonconference tilts at least 2-1 if not unscathed, but they won't be favored in any of their Pac-10 contests. Most of the tougher foes come to Corvallis—Washington, UCLA, Arizona—but the Beavers open conference play at USC and conclude at Oregon, which will be ultra-motivated after having been upset by the Beavers last season in the finale.

PROJECTED RECORD: 2-9



JASON WHITE

JED JACOBSON/ALLSPORT

INSIDE THE PACIFIC-10

■ **TEAM ON THE RISE: California.** The Golden Bears have arguably the best returning defense in the conference, which should be enough to get them a winning season and bowl berth.

■ **TEAM ON THE FALL: Oregon.** The Ducks' defense will keep them close an awful lot, but like Washington State a year ago, it will attempt to stay among the conference's elite while trying to replace an indispensable quarterback in Akili Smith.

■ **OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Trung Canidate, Arizona.** The Pac-10 returns to a bygone era where running the ball is first priority. Canidate and the 'Cats will do it best.

■ **DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Jabari Issa, Washington.** He's an absolute monster, and the Huskies are counting heavily on him.

■ **MUST-SEE GAMES: Arizona State at California, Sept. 25:** The first real test for the lauded Cal defense. USC at Arizona, Oct. 9: We find out just how good the 'Cats are. If they win big, they're real good. **Arizona at UCLA, Oct. 30:** The 'Cats only real road test before the season finale at Tempe against ASU. The Bruins could take over as the favorite down the stretch. **UCLA at USC, Nov. 20:** Because it's a fun rivalry and there will be numerous story plots, not to mention that a Rose Bowl berth may be on the line if Arizona stumbles. **Arizona at Arizona State, Nov. 27:** Not only the conference title, but a berth in the national title bowl game may be on the line for the Wildcats, if they are even

better to this point than we expected.

■ **MOST UNDERRATED PLAYER: Chad Morton, USC.** He's a tailback at the former Tailback U. He's good for 1,500 yards if he stays healthy.

■ **NEXT STOP, NFL: J.R. Redmond, RB, Arizona State.** He's actually underachieved in college to this point but NFL scouts drool over his game-breaking potential. Also: Travis Claridge, OL, USC

■ **JOHNNY ON THE SPOT: Arizona coach Dick Tomey.** His program has never been in this position before.

■ **RECRUITING WINNERS AND LOSERS:** UCLA's recruiting class was ranked second in the country by one publication while USC's was also in the top 10. Washington, Stanford and Arizona State also ranked among the top 25, while Arizona was notably absent. Oregon State struggled again, but watch that improve dramatically with the arrival of Dennis Erickson.

■ **ODDS AND ENDS:** Arizona is viewed as a legitimate national title contender, but the remainder of the Pac-10 may be a bit watered down compared to the last several years. Washington has been on a slight decline and lost its quarterback, UCLA likely won't match its '98 performance with McNown gone. Ditto for Oregon, with the loss of Akili Smith. And all USC lost was arguably the best athlete in the country in linebacker Chris Claiborne. New stars will rise, but expect the conference to be down a notch for '99.



CHAD MORTON

TODD WASHAW/ALLSPORT

PACIFIC-10 PROFILE

Pressure on Arizona to actually top '98

In 1998, the University of Arizona Wildcats lost only one game and defeated one of the most prestigious programs in the country in bowl game. Pretty impressive, ey?

Well, sure, but Arizona boosters don't expect the fun to end with the Holiday Bowl triumph over Nebraska last December. This time around, nothing less than a perfect regular season is expected from a program that won a national title only four years ago—in basketball.

"Within the program, we don't really pay attention to what others say or write about us, good or bad," said coach Dick Tomey, who nevertheless must be feeling an increased urgency after the success of '98. "We have a good football team that I believe is capable of great things, but beyond that we don't pay much attention."

The Wildcats are expected to at least equal their 12-1 performance of last season because they return most of the core group that led that charge, including quarterback Keith Smith and running back extraordinaire Trung Canidate.

Wouldn't it be nice, Coach, to play for a national title.

"We're pretty stubborn about where our focus is," he said. "We want to win one game at a time, try to win the conference and play in a major bowl. 'And of course, we'd like to beat (Arizona State).' Anything less may cause an uproar in Tucson."



TRUNG CANIDATE

BRUCE LASHWARTZMAN

Southeastern

BY TONY PETTIS

CONFERENCE

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Tee Martin ^(o)	Tennessee	6-3	215	Sr.
RB	Jamal Lewis	Tennessee	6-0	225	Jr.
RB	Shaun Alexander	Alabama	6-1	205	Sr.
WR	Jermale Kelly	S. Carolina	6-2	193	Jr.
WR	Anthony Lucas	Arkansas	6-3	198	Sr.
TE	Joe Dean Davenport	Arkansas	6-7	257	Sr.
T	Cooper Carlisle	Florida	6-6	299	Sr.
G	Cosey Coleman	Tennessee	6-5	315	Jr.
C	Zac Zedalis	Florida	6-3	298	Jr.
G	Steve Herndon	Georgia	6-4	288	Sr.
T	Louis Williams	LSU	6-6	301	Jr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DE	Kenny Smith	Alabama	6-5	286	Jr.
DT	Darwin Walker	Tennessee	6-3	290	Sr.
DT	Jimmy Brumbaugh	Auburn	6-1	294	Sr.
DE	Leonardo Carson ^(d)	Auburn	6-3	282	Sr.
LB	Raynoch Thompson	Tennessee	6-3	217	Sr.
LB	Armegis Spearman	Ole Miss	6-1	245	Sr.
LB	Orantes Grant	Georgia	6-1	222	Sr.
CB	Mark Roman	LSU	6-0	185	Sr.
CB	Antwoine Nolan	Auburn	5-9	188	Sr.
S	Arturo Freeman	S. Carolina	6-2	195	Sr.
S	Deon Grant	Tennessee	6-3	205	Jr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Seth Hanson	Kentucky	6-2	195	Jr.
P	Jeff Walker	Miss. St.	5-11	217	Sr.
KR	Jimmy Williams	Vanderbilt	5-10	187	Jr.

^(o) Offensive Player of the Year ^(d) Defensive Player of the Year

PROJECTED FINISH

EASTERN DIVISION		CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1.	Tennessee	7-1	10-1
2.	Florida	6-2	9-2
3.	Georgia	6-2	9-2
4.	Kentucky	3-5	5-6
5.	South Carolina	1-7	2-9
6.	Vanderbilt	0-8	2-9
WESTERN DIVISION		CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1.	Arkansas	6-2	9-2
2.	Alabama	5-3	8-3
3.	LSU	4-4	7-4
4.	Ole Miss	4-4	7-4
5.	Mississippi State	3-5	6-5
6.	Auburn	1-7	4-7
SEC TITLE GAME			
Tennessee over Arkansas			

TEE MARTIN



VINCENT LAFORET/ALLSPORT

TENNESSEE

VOLUNTEERS

If there is anything that can be learned from the 1998 college football season, it's that accurately picking the national champion is often the ultimate exercise in futility. It's not that it was thought to be impossible for Tennessee to win the national title; after all, the Volunteers under quarterback Peyton Manning had been hovering around the top five for the last three years. It's that virtually everyone with a pulse thought Tennessee would pull it off before Manning left for the NFL.

For the Vols to approach 1998 with title aspirations just didn't seem logical since Manning was in Indianapolis, seven more of his teammates were drafted and four signed as free agents. There were too many holes, too little experience and not enough leadership for 1998 to be anything but a rebuilding year in Knoxville.

But a funny thing happened on the way to an 8-4 record. Tennessee won. And won again, then won some more and by the time the season was over, the record was a perfect 13-0 and some space had to be cleared in the trophy case. All the holes got filled, talent made up for experience and leadership emerged from unlikely sources. After two years as Manning's backup, Tee Martin made the quarterback position his own. Every break went Tennessee's way and every problem found a quick solution. Even the loss of potential All-SEC tailback Jamal Lewis with a knee injury at midseason was nothing more than a slight distraction.

So how do you top perfection? According to Tennessee coach Phillip Fulmer, whose winning percentage is without peer among active coaches, it's by being perfect all over again. "We've got to stay hungry," Fulmer said. "We've got to put last year aside and realize that we need to do everything we can to be good this season."

The task, though, looks easier this year. There are 13 starters back on offense and defense, and the only obvious holes are at wide receiver, fullback and middle linebacker. Picking a national champion is still as risky a proposition as it always is, but the chances of Tennessee coming through certainly look a lot better than they did a year ago.

"It's not where we start, it's where we finish," Fulmer said. "I hope (the pollsters) will put us down for sixth, seventh or eighth and we can go about our business."

Offense Like any inexperienced quarterback, Tee Martin struggled early on last year with taking over a complicated offense like Tennessee's. But in the second half of the Georgia game, it was like the lights suddenly came on and Martin transformed from a manager of the offense to a manhandler of defenses. The key, though, according to first-year offensive coordinator Randy Sanders, a former Vols signalcaller himself, is that Martin stepped into the job with the first rule of quarterbacking down pat—don't get the team beat. "He is just a very mature young man for his age and has everything in perspective," Sanders said.

But even with Martin's experience and confidence, don't expect the offensive balance to tilt back to where it was during the Manning days. Wide receiver is pretty thin, with both starters last year, Peerless Price and Jermaine Copeland, in NFL camps. Plus when you have the tailback depth that Tennessee does, it just makes sense to use them.

Lewis was held out of spring practice for precautionary reasons, but should be better than ever when the fall comes. His replacements last season, Travis Henry and Travis Stephens, are good enough to be starters at most conference schools. With a ground game to aid the

development of the wide receivers, it's not out of line to think that Tennessee could improve on its 34.0 ppg scoring average of a year ago.

Defense There is only one significant loss on this side of the football, but, boy is it a big one. Middle linebacker Al Wilson had been both the literal and figurative center of the Tennessee defense for two years, at times pushing his teammates to perform through the sheer force of his will. He missed three games last year because of a shoulder injury, but the Vols gave up just 30 points in them because Wilson's mere presence on the sideline provided much-needed leadership. His departure is huge, and the issue of who between freshman Keyon Whiteside and sophomore Bernard Jackson would take over the position was not settled in the spring. "It's wide open from that standpoint," said defensive coordinator John Chavis.

Elsewhere, the Tennessee appears solid. The defensive line has two All-SEC types in Billy Ratliff and Darwin Walker at tackle, and Shaun Ellis is a big-play maker at end. Outside linebacker Raynoch Thompson, who won All-SEC honors a year ago, has speed to burn. Free safety Deon Grant and corner Dwayne Goodrich are future Sunday players.

The key, according to Chavis, is getting everything working right from the start. "Last year, the last four-and-a-half games, we played as well as anybody in the country," he said. "We can't wait that long this year."

Special Teams Tennessee's opponents couldn't have been happier to see placekicker Jeff Hall graduate, because he quashed more than a few dreams in his four years as a starter. He kicked two game-winning field goals last season alone, including the overtime one against Florida for the Vols' first win over the Gators in six years. His replacement is likely to be senior walk-on Robert Loudermilk, though the competition is still open. Junior David Leaverton was sometimes spectacular as a punter, but not nearly consistent enough. Sophomore Eric Parker needs work at punt returns, but Cedrick Wilson is solid on kickoffs.

New One to Know With Ratliff and Walker at tackle, Tennessee is more than solid in the interior of the defensive line. But don't be surprised if you see a big guy with a No. 4 on his chest getting quite a few snaps at the position this season. John Henderson was probably the best defensive line prospect in the nation when he signed last year, and would have pushed for a starting job a year ago had he been eligible.

With a year to get stronger and learn technique to go along with his 6-foot-7, 280-pound frame, the blazing fast Henderson is going to be difficult for opposing offensive lines to handle with two players, much less one.

Schedule With home games against Wyoming, archival Memphis and Notre Dame, the Vols' nonconference slate is better than most. But it's the SEC games that are critical. If Tennessee's road games in the league were in Knoxville, the Vols would almost be an automatic pick to repeat as champs. But trips to Florida, Alabama and Arkansas are really going to make things difficult. The game against the Gators is the key. If the Vols can escape Gainesville with a win, then three straight home games against Memphis, Auburn and Georgia should make a third straight SEC title game

PROJECTED RECORD: 10-1

Southeastern Conference

LOCATION: Knoxville, TN
ENROLLMENT: 25,000
STADIUM: Neyland Stadium (102,854)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 13-0
COACH: Phillip Fulmer
CAREER: 67-11; **HERE:** 67-11
BOWL: Won Fiesta (23-16 over Florida State)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 46

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE			
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT
QB	Tee Martin*	6-3	215
TB	Jamal Lewis*	6-0	225
FB	Phillip Crosby	6-1	243
WR	David Martin	6-4	210
WR	Cedrick Wilson*	5-10	175
TE	John Finlayson	6-4	280
LT	Chad Clifton*	6-6	320
LG	Toby Champion	6-4	305
C	Spencer Riley*	6-3	295
RG	Cosey Coleman*	6-5	315
RT	Josh Tucker	6-4	305
K	Robert Loudermilk	6-4	210

DEFENSE			
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT
DE	Shaun Ellis*	6-4	275
DT	Billy Ratliff	6-3	275
DT	Darwin Walker*	6-3	290
DE	Will Overstreet	6-4	250
OLB	Eric Westmoreland*	6-0	215
MLB	Keyon Whiteside	6-2	230
OLB	Raynoch Thompson*	6-3	217
CB	Andre Lott	5-11	185
CB	Dwayne Goodrich*	6-0	185
SS	Fred White*	5-11	200
FS	Deon Grant*	5-11	200
P	David Leaverton*	6-4	210

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING			
	YDS	AVG	TD
Travis Henry	970	5.5	7
Jamal Lewis	497	6.8	3
Travis Stephens	477	4.5	4
Tee Martin	287	2.8	7
PASSING			
	YDS	PCT	TD
Tee Martin	2164	57.3	19
RECEIVING			
	REC	YDS	AVG
Cedrick Wilson	33	558	16.9
John Finlayson	4	47	11.6
Travis Henry	4	31	7.8
David Martin	3	59	19.7
KICKING			
None			
DEFENSE			
	TKLS	MISC	
Raynoch Thompson	89	2 sacks, 10 TFL	
Eric Westmoreland	79	4 PBU, 11 TFL	
Deon Grant	62	6 PBU, 3 TFL	
Corey Terry	58	5 fumb. caus., 4 sacks	
Fred White	57	4 PBU, 3 TFL	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Wyoming	—
Sept. 18	at Florida	W, 20-17 (OT)
Sept. 25	Memphis	—
Oct. 2	Auburn	W, 17-9
Oct. 9	Georgia	W, 22-3
Oct. 23	at Alabama	W, 35-18
Oct. 30	South Carolina	W, 49-14
Nov. 6	Notre Dame	—
Nov. 13	at Arkansas	W, 28-24
Nov. 20	at Kentucky	W, 59-21
Nov. 27	Vanderbilt	W, 41-0

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	398.8	4th
Scoring offense	34.0	2nd
Total defense	303.0	2nd
Scoring defense	14.4	2nd

(Rank is SEC ranking)

Southeastern Conference

LOCATION: Gainesville, FL
ENROLLMENT: 42,000
STADIUM: Florida Field (83,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass (Bermuda)
1998 RECORD: 10-2
COACH: Steve Spurrier
CAREER: 113-31-2; **HERE:** 93-18-1
BOWL: Won Orange (31-10 over Syracuse)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 51

FLORIDA

GATORS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Doug Johnson*	6-2	217	Sr.
TB	Robert Gillespie	5-9	177	So.
FB	Rod Frazier*	5-11	230	Jr.
WR	Darrell Jackson	6-0	194	Jr.
WR	Travis Taylor	6-1	188	Jr.
TE	Erron Kinney	6-6	266	Sr.
LT	Kenyatta Walker*	6-5	307	So.
LG	Ryan Kalich*	6-3	302	Sr.
C	Zac Zedalis*	6-3	298	Jr.
RG	Cheston Blackshear*	6-3	284	Sr.
RT	Cooper Carlisle*	6-6	299	Sr.
PK	Jeff Chandler*	6-2	208	Jr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
LE	Buck Gurley	6-2	267	Jr.
LT	Derrick Chambers	6-4	280	Jr.
RT	Gerald Warren	6-4	303	So.
RE	Thaddeus Bullard	6-4	244	Sr.
SLB	Alex Brown	6-3	248	So.
MLB	Andra Davis	6-1	249	So.
WLB	Keith Kelsey	6-1	252	Sr.
CB	Bennie Alexander*	5-9	175	So.
SS	Rod Graddy*	6-1	198	Jr.
FS	Lester Norwood	6-1	193	So.
CB	Robert Cromartie	5-9	176	So.
P	David Wasielewski*	5-10	222	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Robert Gillespie		310	4.4	2	
Bo Carroll		50	3.8	0	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Doug Johnson		2346	56.2	19	8
Jesse Palmer		1246	59.3	14	5
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Travis Taylor		37	676	18.3	9
Darrell Jackson		26	292	11.2	4
Robert Gillespie		17	272	16.0	1
Alex Willis		10	244	24.4	1
KICKING					
Jeff Chandler, 11 of 15 FG (long 46), 33 of 37 PATs					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Rod Graddy		75	5 PBU		
Marquand Manuel		45	3 sacks, 1 INT		
Keith Kelsey		34	1 sack, 3 TFL		
Derrick Chambers		28	4.5 sacks, 3 TFL		
Gerald Warren		27	2 sacks, 2 TFL		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Western Michigan	—
Sept. 11	Central Florida	—
Sept. 18	Tennessee	L, 17-20
Sept. 25	at Kentucky	W, 51-35
Oct. 2	Alabama	W, 16-10
Oct. 9	at LSU	W, 22-10
Oct. 16	at Auburn	W, 24-3
Oct. 30	Georgia (Jacksonville)	W, 38-7
Nov. 6	Vanderbilt	W, 45-13
Nov. 13	at South Carolina	W, 33-14
Nov. 20	Florida State	L, 12-23

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	461.9	2nd
Scoring offense	31.7	4th
Total defense	286.6	1st
Scoring defense	14.1	1st

(Rank is SEC ranking)

A national championship. Another appearance in the title game. Five SEC crowns. All that was enough for the NCAA, in its annual football records book, to anoint the Florida football program an official "dynasty" in the 1990s, an honor that few teams have ever had bestowed on them.

But in light of what has happened the last couple of years, such a distinction only begs the inevitable question: Is the dynasty crumbling? The Gators were by far the best team in the league from 1993-96, but in 1997 and 1998 couldn't even win their own division.

Tennessee, Florida's dupe for half a decade, has played in the last two SEC title games and won a national championship last year that Gator fans were sure would never come to reside in Knoxville. There has been an almost constant quarterback controversy and more than the usual number of discipline problems. All this has led to more visor spikes than Florida coach Steve Spurrier is comfortable with.

Unfortunately for the Gators, the prospects of adding solid credence to their dynasty claim in 1999 don't look all that great. Some recruiting misses in recent years and early departures for the NFL have left Florida in the position where it can no longer bludgeon opponents with superior talent. Also, teams like Tennessee, Georgia and LSU (which have all ended losing streaks to the Gators in the last two years) don't need psychotherapy anymore when Florida Week rolls around. If all the pieces fit together perfectly, Spurrier might get his team back to Atlanta and get the Gators a chance to make a BCS Bowl, but a national championship would appear a bit of a stretch.

Offense For two years, the quarterback position at Florida has been a fight between junior Jesse Palmer and senior Doug Johnson. Look for the same to happen this year. Palmer started the first half of 1998 before suffering a broken clavicle, Johnson the second half before a broken fibula took him out of the Orange Bowl. Combined, the two threw for over 3,000 yards last year. Johnson would appear to have ground to make up, since sitting out most of spring practice due to surgery handed Palmer almost all the reps. But given his penchant for upsetting the quarterback depth chart, who Spurrier will anoint the starter by the time fall camp is over is anyone's guess.

Unfortunately, whoever is No. 1 won't have the usual stable of Gators' receivers to catch his throws. Florida has just two proven pass catchers, juniors Travis Taylor (MVP of the Orange Bowl) and Darrell Jackson (26 catches for 292 yards, 4 TDs).

The situation at running back isn't much better, what with the graduation of leading rusher Terry Jackson. Sophomore Robert Gillespie, a freshman All-SEC pick a year ago, is talented, but with just 310 yards isn't all that experienced. Junior Bo Carroll, who could push him, has spent more time at wide receiver than tailback recently and senior Eugene McCaslin is being moved to safety. The offensive line is solid, with the only loss being All-SEC tackle Zach Piller. Center Zac Zedalis is All-American material.

Defense Bob Stoops certainly knew when the time was right to get out Stoops, the former Florida defensive coordinator, took the Oklahoma job with the Gators facing the task of replacing nine starters on defense. His replacement, Jon Hoke, has to train four new defensive linemen, three new linebackers and

two new defensive backs. His material includes just four seniors with a grand total of one start between them.

So it's no wonder that Spurrier said that "the focus of spring practice will be the front seven." Florida has been used to dominating opponents with their defensive front, but going into the fall that looked like it was going to be difficult to do. There is talent on the line—junior tackle Derrick Chambers could be a first-round NFL pick and senior end Thaddeus Bullard has been playing behind stars his entire career—but the experience level isn't what it has been in the past. And linebacker is a mess, with only six scholarship players and one with more than 10 tackles last fall. Senior Keith Kelsey, with no starts and 96 career tackles, is the de facto leader.

Not that the secondary is all that much better. The two best players, free safety Teako Brown and cornerback Tony George are gone. Strong safety Ron Graddy, a junior with 75 tackles a year ago, is the "old man" in the defensive backfield, while sophomore Lester Norwood should move up at free safety. Bennie Alexander, a freshman All-American a year ago who had 23 tackles and an interception, will man one corner, while sophomore Robert Cromartie will take over on the other side.

Special Teams This should be a surprisingly strong area for the Gators, considering that Spurrier likes to kick field goals almost as much as he likes to punt. Junior walk-on Jeff Chandler is back after making 33 of 37 extra points and 11 of 15 field goals after replacing Collins Cooper early in the season. Punter David Wasielewski won SEC All-Freshman Freshman honors after averaging 40.4 yards a kick last season. Wide receiver John Capel, who returned kick-offs last year, may take over punt returns as well.

New One to Know Jevon Kearse's nickname when he was at Florida was "The Freak" and it had nothing to do with his choice of Halloween costume. Kearse was a physical marvel, combining the size and strength of a defensive end with the speed of a safety. From his outside linebacker spot last year, he terrorized quarterbacks, registering 75 sacks, six tackles behind the line and forcing teams to double-team him constantly. NFL scouts were elated when he decided to give up his senior year and enter the draft. Sophomore Alex Brown was his primary backup last year, but doesn't have nearly the quickness of his predecessor. He will have to rely more on his 6-foot-3, 248-pound frame if he is going to come close to duplicating Kearse's numbers.

Schedule The Gators couldn't have set it up any better. There is the typical cream-puff opener (Western Michigan) to work out kinks and a moderately competitive second game for a dress rehearsal (Central Florida, but minus graduated quarterback Daunte Culpepper) before the SEC season starts. Most of the tougher games (Tennessee, Alabama, Florida State) are at home, with only LSU looking dangerous on the road. By the time the Gators get to their Nov. 20 date with the Seminoles in Gainesville, Spurrier is hoping the defensive problems and the quarterback controversy will be worked out.

PROJECTED RECORD: 9-2

GEORGIA

BULLDOGS

Jim Donnan can only blame himself. The Georgia coach created this monster in 1997 when he led the Bulldogs to a 10-win season, including a victory in a New Year's Day Bowl. He fed it last year by posting nine victories and coming within an upset by Georgia Tech of another Jan. 1 trip. Now after three straight nationally-ranked recruiting classes, Georgia fans are thinking the Bulldogs are on the verge of national prominence.

And they may very well be right. The Bulldogs return 47 lettermen and half their starters from a year ago, including sophomore phenom quarterback Quincy Carter and all-everything linebacker Orantes Grant. There are question marks, but plenty of young, fast, strong talent to provide the answers. On paper, the Bulldogs have the resources to become a big-time player on both the SEC and the national scene.

But let's hang on for a minute before we go ahead and ship the national championship trophy to Athens. For all the potential the Bulldogs possess, they are still unproven in the big games. Georgia has beaten Florida just once this decade and Tennessee hasn't lost to the 'Dogs since 1988. Auburn has fallen to Georgia just four times since 1990. It's hard to win many conference titles when you can't get past the league's best teams.

Donnan is hoping to change that. Since taking over the program in 1996, he has erased any doubts about translating his phenomenal success at Division I-AA Marshall to the rough-and-tumble world of the SEC, plus he has significantly upgraded Georgia's ability to attract the best athletes to Athens. If he can get the 'Dogs to believe they can win the games that really count, the expectations he has created for himself might not be out of line after all.

Offense Everyone expected quarterback Quincy Carter to compete for the starting job last year as a freshman, but few thought he would succeed right away after two years of playing pro baseball in the Cubs' organization. Turned out that Carter didn't need the slack. He was scary-good from the second he pulled on a uniform, throwing for 368 yards against South Carolina in just his second start. In all, he tossed for more than 200 yards seven times and totaled 2,484 yards in the air. He also rushed for 284 yards and four touchdowns. The school is touting him as a Heisman Trophy candidate this year, and according to Donnan, with good reason. "We've got a quarterback," he said, "who's special."

Unfortunately, Georgia may have to rely on Carter for a while until some younger players can step into the skill roles. Gone is two-way player Champ Bailey, along with wide receiver Tony Small and tight end Larry Brown. Michael Greer (13 for 296) is the top returning catcher. The running game could be a big help if only senior Patrick Pass (101 yards) and sophomore Jasper Sanks (65 yards) can stay away from the injury bug. The offensive line must replace All-American Matt Stinchcomb, but does have three starters returning to provide the base.

Defense Here is where the numbers can be deceiving. On the surface, it looks like the Georgia defense has a rebuilding job to do. After all, only six starters return from a team that was middle-of-the-pack in yards allowed. But dig a little deeper and things don't look quite so bleak. There may only be six starters back, but there are a total of 21 lettermen spread across every position. And Georgia may have been seventh in the SEC in yards per game, but the Bulldogs were fourth in points allowed (172) and just over a field goal out of first. All that adds up to a lot for new defensive coordinator Kevin Ramsey, who coached defensive backs last year for national champion Tennessee, to work with.

The specific strengths are many. Grant, senior Dustin Luckie and junior Adrian Hollingshed give Georgia one of

the most experienced linebacking corps in the league, if not the nation. Junior tackles Richard Seymour and Marcus Stroud have All-SEC potential. And despite losing Bailey, an All-American at corner, and Kirby Smart, an All-SEC strong safety, the secondary still has some bite. Returning starters Larry Mann and corner Jeff Harris combined for seven interceptions last year.

Special Teams There are few problems here for the Bulldogs. Placekicker Hap Hines is back after making 70 percent of his field goals and all but one of his extra points last year. Punter Wynn Kopp didn't fare quite as well, though, averaging just 36 yards per boot. He does have three years to get better, though. Greer should handle punt returns again, but a new kickoff return man will have to be found with the departure of Bailey to NFL riches.

New One to Know Few players caused any many headaches for quarterbacks last season as cornerback Champ Bailey. Despite the triple duty of playing wide receiver on offense and handling kick returns, Bailey was perhaps the best coverage man in the SEC, picking off four passes and breaking up ten. And that was with passers constantly throwing to the side of the field that he was not on. While Cory Robinson won't be able to replace Bailey on offense and special teams, he does have some experience on defense. He totaled 51 tackles last year and broke up 11 passes and should slide right into the starting corner's role without much of a problem.

Schedule Georgia's schedule is probably about as good as it can get. The first four games are at home, and there won't be a real test among them until LSU reports to Athens Oct. 2. Five of the last seven are away from the friendly confines of Athens, but only Tennessee in Knoxville and Florida in Jacksonville are worth getting nervous about. If the Bulldogs can win one of those two, they might find themselves with an extra game down the road in Atlanta in December.


QUINCY CARTER
PROJECTED RECORD: 9-2
LOCATION: Athens, GA

ENROLLMENT: 30,009

STADIUM: Sanford Stadium (86,117)

SURFACE: Natural Grass

1998 RECORD: 9-3

COACH: Jim Donnan

CAREER: 88-32; **HERE:** 64-21

BOWL: Won Peach (35-33 over Virginia)

LETTERMEN RETURNING: 47

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE			
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT
QB	Quincy Carter*	6-2	220
RB	Patrick Pass	5-11	210
RB	Jasper Sanks	6-0	228
WR	Michael Greer*	5-10	173
WR	Thad Parker	5-9	155
TE	Javaris Johnson	6-6	248
OT	Kelvin Williams	6-5	289
OG	Steve Herndon*	6-4	288
C	Miles Luckie*	6-1	285
OG	Jonas Jennings*	6-4	310
OT	Clint Larkin	6-3	300
K	Hap Hines	5-8	175

DEFENSE			
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT
DE	Demetric Evans	6-3	269
DT	Richard Seymour*	6-6	288
DT	Marcus Stroud	6-6	297
DE	Terrin Smith	6-3	228
OLB	Orantes Grant*	6-1	222
MLB	Adrian Hollingshed*	6-2	230
OLB	Dustin Luckie*	6-1	229
CB	Jeff Harris*	6-0	175
CB	Cory Robinson	5-11	187
SS	Earl Chambers	6-1	197
FS	Larry Mann*	6-2	192
P	Wynn Kopp	5-10	170

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Quincy Carter	284	2.9	4
Robert Arnaud	161	6.7	2
Nick Callaway	107	9.7	1
Patrick Pass	101	3.9	0

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Quincy Carter	2484	.607	12	9

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Michael Greer	13	286	22.0	2
Thad Parker	13	152	13.8	1
Quincy Carter	2	55	22.5	0
Javaris Johnson	2	32	4.6	0

KICKING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Hap Hines, 7-10 FG, Long 48, 30-31 PATs				

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Orantes Grant	120	2.5 sacks, 6 TFL, 9 PBU
Adrian Hollingshed	93	1 sack, 3 TFL, 1 INT
Richard Seymour	69	4 sacks, 5 TFL, 14 Pressures
Larry Mann	60	9 PBU, 3 INT
Dustin Luckie	59	2.5 sacks, 4 TFL

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Utah State	—
Sept. 11	South Carolina	W, 17-3
Sept. 25	Central Florida	—
Oct. 2	LSU	W, 28-27
Oct. 9	at Tennessee	L, 3-22
Oct. 16	at Vanderbilt	W, 31-6
Oct. 23	Kentucky	W, 28-26
Oct. 30	Florida (Jacksonville)	L, 7-38
Nov. 13	Auburn	W, 28-17
Nov. 20	at Ole Miss	W, 24-17
Nov. 27	at Georgia Tech	L, 19-21

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	401.7	3rd
Scoring offense	23.4	7th
Total defense	352.8	7th
Scoring defense	17.2	4th

(Rank is SEC ranking)

Southeastern Conference

LOCATION: Lexington, KY
ENROLLMENT: 24,000
STADIUM: Commonwealth Stadium (57,800)
SURFACE: Natural Grass (Bermuda)
1998 RECORD: 7-5
COACH: Hal Mumme
CAREER: 77-38-1; **HERE:** 12-11
BOWL: Lost Outback (26-14 to Penn State)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 53

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Dusty Bonner	6-2	206	So.
TB	Anthony White*	6-1	187	Sr.
FB	Derek Homer*	5-11	197	Jr.
WR	Quentin McCord	5-10	183	Jr.
WR	Jimmy Robinson	6-3	201	Sr.
TE	James Whalen, Jr.*	6-4	231	Sr.
LT	Omar Smith	6-3	285	Jr.
LG	Aaron Daniel	6-3	272	Jr.
C	Nolan DeVaughn	6-5	306	So.
RG	Josh Parrish	6-6	317	So.
RT	Matt Brown	6-5	304	So.
K	Seth Hanson*	6-2	195	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Gordon Crowe	6-3	284	Sr.
DT	John Robinson	6-4	280	Fr.
DT	George Massey	6-3	280	Sr.
DE	Dennis Johnson*	6-7	256	So.
OLB	Jeff Snedegar*	6-2	243	Sr.
MLB	John Rader	6-5	238	Jr.
OLB	Marlon McCree*	6-1	205	Jr.
CB	Eric Kelly*	5-11	190	Jr.
SS	David Johnson	6-0	195	So.
FS	Willie Gary*	5-10	187	Jr.
CB	Kenneth Grant	6-0	200	Jr.
P	Andy Smith	6-3	215	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Derek Homer	716	5.2	7
Anthony White	437	3.9	2

PASSING

None

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Anthony White	78	582	7.5	1
Derek Homer	41	239	5.8	0
Quentin McCord	37	435	11.8	3
Jimmy Robinson	26	285	11.0	2
Garry Davis	23	308	13.4	5

KICKING

Seth Hanson, 11 of 15 FG (long 42), 48 for 51 PATs

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Jeff Snedegar	63	7 TFL, 4 sacks
Marlon McCree	55	11 TFL, 7 sacks
David Johnson	53	2 TFL, 2 int
John Rader	39	7 TFL, 2 PBU
Dennis Johnson	26	3 TFL, 2 sacks

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Louisville	W, 68-34
Sept. 11	Connecticut	—
Sept. 18	at Indiana	W, 31-27
Sept. 25	Florida	L, 35-51
Oct. 2	Arkansas	L, 20-27
Oct. 9	at South Carolina	W, 33-28
Oct. 16	Louisiana State	W, 39-36
Oct. 23	at Georgia	L, 26-28
Nov. 4	at Mississippi St.	W, 37-35
Nov. 13	at Vanderbilt	W, 55-17
Nov. 20	Tennessee	L, 21-59

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	534.2	1st
Scoring offense	37.9	1st
Total defense	386.1	9th
Scoring defense	31.7	11th

(Rank is SEC ranking)

KENTUCKY WILDCATS

Shouldn't Hal Mumme be in therapy? After all, the top pick in this year's NFL draft was the Kentucky coach's starting quarterback last year. The most prolific receiver in SEC history has run out of eligibility. The entire starting offensive line has played its last game at Commonwealth Stadium. For a coach who has built his entire professional reputation by piling up huge numbers in the scoring and yardage totals, there would seem to be very little offense in Lexington this fall.

So why can't Mumme be seen anywhere these days without a smile on his face? It's because he doesn't see Kentucky football in the context of what it has been, but in where it is going. The Wildcats can boast of a New Year's Day bowl trip for the first time in almost half a century. The success of Tim Couch got Kentucky into recruiting areas the school could only dream about in the past. The defense, the team's weak link in Mumme's first two years, would appear to be improved. In that light, spontaneous giggling from Mumme could almost be expected.

That is not to say there isn't pressure. Mumme was rewarded with a big contract extension and a fat raise last winter, which takes him out of the dregs of the SEC coaches' pay scale. Plus, tickets are so hot the school is feverishly adding 10,000 seats and 40 luxury suites to Commonwealth Stadium, the first major expansion of the facility in over 25 years. And Mumme would like very much to prove once and for all that while a talented quarterback like Couch is a huge bonus, that the offensive system he brought from Valdosta State can survive transition on the Division I-A level.

But even in his third season, the honeymoon period is very much alive for Mumme. His confident swagger and tell-it-like-it-is approach will keep him wildly popular in the Bluegrass State even if the Wildcats take a step back or two this year in the win column. Not that he is expecting that to happen. Even though Kentucky still lags behind division brethren like Tennessee, Florida and Georgia in talent and there are obstacles to overcome, Mumme believes success is not only possible, it's probable.

"We're just very thankful to be coaching here," he said.

Offense

Can there be any upside to the early departure of Couch, who became the first SEC quarterback to throw for over 4,000 yards in a season? Mumme believes there is. With an entirely new group of blockers to work with as well, a trial by fire, according to Mumme, might just prove beneficial to everyone.

"(It) allows our young quarterbacks and young line-men to grow up together," he said. "Looking ahead to 2000, we won't be breaking in a new quarterback, which we would have done if Tim had stayed for this season."

By that time, sophomore Dusty Bonner, who will take over for Couch at the controls of the offense, should be pretty familiar with the Mumme system. Until he becomes comfortable, he does have some pretty good talent at the skill positions to help out. Kentucky's top four leading rushers are back, including fullback Derek Homer and halfback Anthony White, who combined for over 1,000 yards last year. And while Craig Yeast, the SEC's career receptions leader, has graduated, the Wildcats do return six players who caught at least 20 passes a year ago.

Mumme is hoping that eagerness can make up for experience, though, especially early. "The number one thing is that they have this youthful enthusiasm about everything," he said.

Defense

While it might not look like it on the surface, the Kentucky defense did make big strides last year despite ranking ninth in the league in yards allowed and 11th in scoring. With new starters almost everywhere, the points allowed dropped, the rushing defense improved by almost 30 a game and the 'Cats were second in the

SEC in third-down conversion defense. "If we can make those kind of improvements this year, we can make up for an inexperienced offense," Mumme said.

That remains to be seen, although there should be improvement. Junior Willie Gary will return to free safety after missing most of last year with injury. Senior linebacker Jeff Snedegar has all-star potential and end Dennis Johnson has a Freshman All-America stamp to build on.

Defensive coordinator Mike Major's rebuilding of the defense around speed could start to pay some dividends, if health doesn't become an issue. "We know they can run, we know they can hit, we know they like to hit," Mumme said. "The biggest thing is our staying power and our strength."

Special Teams

Junior Seth Hanson is one of the conference's best placekickers, having set a school record for points by a kicker last year with 81. His 33-yard field goal on the final play was the game-winner against LSU. A replacement must be found at punter for Jimmy Carter, but that isn't such a big deal, since the Wildcats rarely allow punts to be returned and Mumme is willing to go for it on fourth down from just about anywhere on the field. The bigger loss here is Yeast, who won't be returning punts and kickoffs.

New One to Know

Mumme went into the spring believing that Couch's successor wouldn't be set for sure until the fall, but before the Blue and White game, he put sophomore Dusty Bonner at the top of the depth chart. It was an obvious choice, since Bonner had been a backup to Couch in 1997 but had redshirted last year with an eye toward Couch's eventual matriculation to the NFL. And there was the fact that Bonner went to high school in Valdosta, Ga., and saw Mumme's Valdosta State teams every fall Saturday.

Schedule

There are not many gimmes in this group. Two of the nonconference games—Louisville and Indiana—will be battles, and it's possible the Wildcats will be the favorite in just two of their SEC games. The stretch from the middle of October to the middle of November will be particularly brutal, with four road trips sandwiched around a home game against what should be a vengeful LSU team. One of those road games, against Mississippi State, is a Thursday night ESPN game.



DENNIS JOHNSON

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-6

SOUTH CAROLINA

GAMECOCKS

The South Carolina football program desperately wants the rest of the SEC to take it seriously, and are willing to go to just about any lengths to make it happen. The Gamecocks have one of the most impressive football stadiums in the league, with state-of-the-art facilities for the players. Their luxury boxes could turn heads in the NFL. They race onto the field for each game at Williams-Brice Stadium through billows of smoke with the theme to "2001" blaring over the sound system.

But since joining the league in 1992, South Carolina has been all style and no substance. The Gamecocks have never posted a winning conference record, have never won more than seven games in a year, have been to just one bowl, the snooze-a-second Carquest. Brad Scott, hired with such promise from his assistant's job at Florida State in 1994, was fired as head coach in November after a 1-10 record, the worst in school history.

Enter Lou Holtz. In what would have to be considered one of the more bizarre hirings in recent memory, the former Notre Dame legend left his cushy CBS broadcasting job to take over one of the most mediocre programs in college football history. There were persistent rumors that Holtz only agreed to coach the Gamecocks as a prelude to his son, Skip, inheriting the job in a few years, but the elder Holtz says that's not true.

"I am here because I want to be here," he said in taking the job. "I'm not here because of finances. I'm not here because of other opportunities. I'm here because I believe in this state. I'm also here because I believe in the future of the USC football team."

Holtz is going to need a lot of positive thinking power, because it's likely to be a while before the team shakes off the debacle of last year and returns to competitiveness. There is talent, but not a lot of depth, and quarterback Phil Petty is still unproven. Holtz acknowledges it's going to take some time.

"Patience will need to become a virtue of mine," he said.

Offense The good news for the Gamecocks is that they return seven starters to this side of the ball. The bad news is that those seven starters were 10th in the league in scoring offense last year and the four who departed were among the best on the unit. Quarterback Anthony Wright didn't have the senior year he had hoped, in coming back from reconstructive knee surgery, but he did still throw for almost 1,900 yards and 10 touchdowns. Wide receiver Zola Davis had 164 catches in his career, while All-SEC center Jamar Nesbit and tackle Andray Spearman were solid contributors. All must be replaced.

But at least the offense doesn't have to be completely overhauled. Senior tailback Troy Hambrick led the team in rushing with 701 yards and wide receiver Jermale Kelly is a two-year starter and an All-SEC candidate. Petty, while inexperienced in a starting role, did see action in 10 games last year and threw for 642 yards and seven touchdowns.

The biggest problem as far as Holtz sees it, is the offensive line, which featured three freshman starters a year ago and hasn't improved nearly enough to suit him. "We've got enough talent to be decent there, but the retention has bothered me,"

Holtz said. "We'll need to make a lot of progress over the summer along the offensive line."

Defense The reason South Carolina lost so many games last season is that the Gamecocks couldn't stop anyone. And we mean anyone. Six teams scored more than 30 points on USC and the 396.8 yards a game they allowed was 10th in the league. The main problem was a weak defensive line and linebacking corps, which gave up a league-worst 179 yards a game on the ground and totaled just 13 sacks. It's no wonder the Gamecocks had double-digit losses.

Defensive coordinator Charlie Strong and Holtz have their work cut out for them, but they do at least have some material to work with. Seven starters are back, including free safety Arturo Freeman, who could vie for All-American honors if he's 100%. Freeman went down with torn ligaments in his knee during 1998 preseason camp and missed all of last year's defensive disaster. Senior linebacker John Abraham and senior tackle Cecil Caldwell weren't so lucky, but should be much improved this season. Linebacker Corey Atkins has the potential to be a star.

Special Teams This area should show marked improvement this season. Placekicker Steve Florio missed most of 1998 with lower back problems and a medical redshirt has given him back his senior year. That also means that Courtney Leavitt can concentrate on his punting, and that's a good thing; he made just 4 of 12 field goals last year. Running back Boo Williams should again handle both the kick and punt return duties.

New One to Know Brad Scott was supposed to be an offensive genius when he came to South Carolina from Florida State five years ago, but he managed only enough offense to take the Gamecocks to one bowl game in half a decade. Then there was the much-publicized feud with offensive coordinator John Eason that led to Eason being replaced before the start of last season. USC fans are hoping for better things out of Lou Holtz's son, Skip, who takes over as assistant head coach, offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach. The younger Holtz came to Columbia from UConn, where he helped resurrect the Huskies football program. UConn won 10 games last year and made the NCAA I-AA playoffs with an offense that ranked 11th nationally.

Schedule Lou Holtz could change just about everything about the South Carolina program when he took over, but there wasn't much he could do about this. Too bad. This isn't exactly the slate that a team coming off a 1-10 season would be hoping for, opening with North Carolina State on the road, and hosting East Carolina and Clemson at home. And those are just the nonconference games. South Carolina gets to make trips to defending national champion Tennessee, defending SEC West champ Mississippi State, and nine-game winners Arkansas and Georgia. At least Vanderbilt and Kentucky have to come to Columbia.

PROJECTED RECORD: 2-9

LOCATION: Columbia, SC
ENROLLMENT: 23,489
STADIUM: Williams-Brice (82,950)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 1-10
COACH: Lou Holtz
CAREER: 216-95-7; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 48

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Phil Petty	6-3	193	So.
TB	Troy Hambrick*	6-0	221	Sr.
FB	Antonie Nesmith	5-10	210	So.
WR	Jermale Kelly*	6-2	193	Jr.
WR	Ben Fleming	5-11	201	Sr.
TE	Trevon Matthews*	6-2	243	Sr.
OT	Melvin Page	6-5	320	So.
OG	Phillip Jones*	6-2	272	So.
C	Scott Browne*	6-2	258	Jr.
OG	Kevin Rivers	6-3	299	So.
OT	Jason Cox*	6-5	315	So.
PK	Steve Florio	5-9	193	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Kalimba Edwards	6-6	225	So.
DT	Cecil Caldwell*	6-1	268	Sr.
DT	Cleveland Pinkney	6-2	270	Jr.
DE	Matt Marsters*	6-4	231	Sr.
OLB	John Abraham*	6-4	237	Sr.
MLB	Andre Offing*	6-1	238	Jr.
OLB	Corey Atkins*	6-1	230	Sr.
CB	Sheldon Brown	5-10	175	So.
CB	Kevin House*	5-11	165	So.
SS	Ray Green*	6-3	186	Sr.
FS	Arturo Freeman	6-1	195	Sr.
P	Courtney Leavitt*	5-11	210	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Troy Hambrick		751	4.9	4
Boo Williams		253	4.7	1
Antonie Nesmith		188	3.5	0

PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Phil Petty		642	49.1	7	5

RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jermale Kelly		44	555	12.6	4
Ben Fleming		24	336	14.0	1
Boo Williams		24	335	14.0	1
Troy Hambrick		22	166	7.5	0
Kerry Hood		12	112	9.3	2

KICKING		None	
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC
Ray Green		108	1 TFL, 2 INT
Andre Offing		81	3 TFL, 1 sack
John Abraham		61	5 TFL, 7 sacks
Kenny Harney		54	3 fumb. rec., 3 TFL
Cecil Caldwell		49	4 TFL, 1 sack

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at North Carolina St.	—
Sept. 11	at Georgia	L, 3-17
Sept. 18	East Carolina	—
Sept. 25	at Mississippi St.	L, 0-38
Oct. 2	Ole Miss	L, 28-30
Oct. 9	Kentucky	L, 28-33
Oct. 16	at Arkansas	L, 28-41
Oct. 23	Vanderbilt	L, 14-17
Oct. 30	at Tennessee	L, 14-49
Nov. 13	Florida	L, 14-33
Nov. 21	Clemson	L, 19-28

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	355.0	8th
Scoring offense	18.0	10th
Total defense	396.8	10th
Scoring defense	30.0	10th

(Rank is SEC ranking)

Southeastern Conference

LOCATION: Nashville, TN
ENROLLMENT: 10,300
STADIUM: Vanderbilt Stadium (41,600)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 2-9
COACH: Woody Widenhofer
CAREER: 17-48-1; **HERE:** 5-17
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 44

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Greg Zolman*	6-4	190	So.
TB	Rodney Williams*	5-11	215	So.
HB	Todd Yoder*	6-4	234	Sr.
WR	Tavarus Hogans*	5-10	191	Sr.
WR	Adam Ditto*	5-11	178	So.
TE	Elliott Carson*	6-5	250	Jr.
LT	Brian Gruber*	6-7	305	Jr.
LG	Darren Rothenberg	6-3	311	Jr.
C	Jeff Barnett*	6-3	270	Sr.
RG	Michael Saltsman	6-4	290	Jr.
RT	Raminte Byndom*	6-4	300	Sr.
K	John Markham*	6-1	210	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Doyle Crosby*	6-4	278	So.
NT	Ryan Aulds*	6-3	252	Jr.
DE	Chuck Losey	6-4	255	So.
OLB	Matt Stewart*	6-4	228	Jr.
MLB	Jamie Winborn*	6-0	232	So.
MLB	Antuan Bradford	6-0	218	So.
OLB	Lamont Turner*	6-1	235	Sr.
CB	Jimmy Williams*	5-10	193	Jr.
SS	Ainsley Battles*	5-11	193	Sr.
FS	Harold Lercius	5-11	192	So.
CB	Brian Taylor	5-11	191	So.
P	Joe Webb*	6-3	192	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Rodney Williams	608	4.8	3
Jared McGrath	528	4.6	1
Lew Thomas	286	4.3	1

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Greg Zolman	969	47.6	4	7
David Wallace	678	45.7	4	11

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Tavarus Hogans	28	366	13.1	3
Elliott Carson	25	190	7.6	0
Nezih Hasanoglu	19	250	13.2	0
Todd Yoder	13	111	8.5	1

KICKING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
John Markham, 13 of 21 FG (long 49), 13 for 15 PATS				

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Jamie Winborn	131	8 sacks, 15 TFL, 2 PBU
Ainsley Battles	100	7 TFL, 2 sacks, 1 INT
Lamont Turner	98	6 TFL, 2 INTs, 4 PBU
Jimmy Williams	79	4 INT, 8 PBU
Matt Stewart	65	11 TFL, 2 sacks, 2 PBU

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Alabama	L, 7-32
Sept. 11	Northern Illinois	—
Sept. 18	at Ole Miss	L, 6-30
Sept. 25	at Duke	W, 36-33 (2OT)
Oct. 2	Mississippi State	L, 0-42
Oct. 9	The Citadel	—
Oct. 16	Georgia	L, 6-31
Oct. 23	at South Carolina	W, 17-14
Nov. 6	at Florida	L, 13-45
Nov. 13	Kentucky	L, 17-55
Nov. 27	at Tennessee	L, 0-41

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	267.6	12th
Scoring offense	12.9	12th
Total defense	441.2	12th
Scoring defense	33.5	12th

(Rank is SEC ranking)

VANDERBILT

COMMODORES

Vanderbilt did not finish last in the SEC's Eastern Division in 1998. Now that might not sound like such a great accomplishment, since four other teams in the division can make such a boast as well. But when it's the Commodore football program you're talking about, there is much pride to be had in such simple pleasures. Vanderbilt had been sixth in the East for three straight years going into 1998, but a 17-14 October victory over South Carolina tagged the Gamecocks with that honor.

And while there was some measure of vindication in not being the complete laughingstock of the SEC, the problems for the Commodores went even deeper last year than most. After years of having a championship defense prop up a pathetic offense, the wheels came off both units in 1998. Vanderbilt was 11th or worse in the league in seven major statistical offensive and defensive categories. The offense averaged less than two touchdowns a game and the defense gave up more than 33 points.

Head coach Woody Widenhofer cut first-year offensive coordinator Steve Crosby some slack, but defensive coordinator Norm Parker has been replaced by Dino Folino, who had coached defensive backs previously. And Widenhofer, the architect of the "Steel Curtain" defenses of the NFL's Pittsburgh Steelers in the 1970s, has promised to be more involved in the details.

Will it make a difference? Probably not that much. Even with 19 of 22 starters on offense and defense returning, Vanderbilt just doesn't have the talent to measure up with the rest of the teams in the SEC, especially the rugged East, where Tennessee, Florida, Georgia and Kentucky all went to bowl games last year. If the defense can return to the form of the last few years, the Commodores will again annoy opponents, but not much else.

Offense How bad was Vanderbilt on offense last year? If the Commodores had doubled their scoring average and put up 100 more yards a game in total offense, they still wouldn't have broken the top five in the league in either category. Much of the carnage was due to the fact that Vanderbilt had zero experience at quarterback and started three different players over the course of the season.

At least that problem appears solved as sophomore Greg Zolman enters fall camp as the No. 1 signalcaller. Zolman started four of the last five games last year, and threw for 969 yards and four touchdowns. He would appear to have the upper hand over sophomore David Wallace, who skipped spring practice to play baseball.

As far as receiver goes, there are at least plenty of names to choose from—seven Commodores have started at least one game at receiver in their careers. Senior Tavarus Hogans, who led the team in receptions last year (29), and sophomore Nezih Hasanoglu, an SEC All-Freshman pick, should be the starters. Senior Todd Yoder, who averaged a team-high 21.3 yards a catch, returns at H-back.

The running game, though, could turn out to be the team's strength. Tailback Rodney Williams was on his way to becoming the school's all-time leading freshman rusher before a shoulder injury took him out of the last three games. Jared McGrath had 528 yards in six starts and Lew Thomas had almost 300 more as a backup. The offensive line is almost as well-stocked. Only two starters graduated, and Michael Saltsman, a starter in 1997 who broke his leg prior to fall drills a year ago, is back healthy. Senior center Jeff Barnett is being touted by the school as a possible All-SEC candidate.

Defense The defensive problems of a year ago have led Widenhofer to make the second overhaul of the unit in as many years. Along with Parker, Widenhofer has also scrapped the team's former 4-3 alignment, replacing it with a 3-4 scheme which he believes will allow

Vanderbilt to take advantage of the team's strength at line-backer.

"We have tremendous talent and depth here and it only makes sense to get our best athletes on the field," Widenhofer said. "We think in making this move we instantly have more defensive depth." Sophomore Jamie Winborn, who led the SEC in tackles last year, leads the linebacking corps, joined by senior Lamont Turner and junior Matt Stewart. The fourth spot will be manned by either sophomore Nate Morrow or redshirt freshman Brandon Walthor.

The rest of the defense is just as experienced, if not quite as solid. Junior Ryan Aulds, a freshman All-American in 1997, and three sophomores will make up the defensive line, while the backfield is a mix of experience and youth. Two-year starter and team co-captain Ainsley Battles leads the secondary from his strong safety position. Cornerback Jimmy Williams, a two-way player who had seven catches at wide receiver last year, has All-SEC potential.

Special Teams Junior placekicker John Markham was a huge part of the Vanderbilt offense last year, accounting for the team's only points in the loss to Ole Miss and hitting 13 of 21 field goal attempts overall. He is back, as is junior punter Joe Webb, who should improve on his 37.6-yard average. Williams, who averaged 23.4 yards per kick return and had one touchdown, should be one of the premier players at that position in the nation.

New One to Know Running back Rodney Williams isn't exactly an unknown in the SEC, having rushed for 608 yards and three touchdowns as a freshman last year. But the shoulder injury he suffered kept him from reaching his full potential, which was most likely a 1,000-yard season. If he can keep healthy this season and the offensive line can get him a few holes, Williams has the talent to become a star.

Schedule Brutal, as always. Nonconference games at home against Northern Illinois and The Citadel are winnable, but a Sept. 25 date at pass-happy Duke will be difficult to handle. Vanderbilt does get two of their most difficult SEC opponents (Alabama and Georgia) at home, but play their most winnable league games (Ole Miss and South Carolina) on the road. And then there are November trips to Florida and Tennessee, which would be enough to send any coach into a full-body shiver.



JARED McGRATH

JOHN GRISHOP/SCHWARTZMAN SPORTS

PROJECTED RECORD: 2-9

ARKANSAS

RAZORBACKS

It takes a second look at the facts just to make sure everything that happened last season is actually true. Arkansas, coming off back-to-back 4-7 records and sporting a brand new head coach with zero Division I-A experience, came within a stumble and a fumble of wrecking Tennessee's undefeated national championship season. Of setting themselves up for a chance at the SEC title. Of possibly worming their way into the Bowl Alliance picture. Still seems too corny to be true, doesn't it? Houston Nutt, the former Arkansas ball boy, returned to his home state and in his first season lead the Razorbacks to a 9-3 record and an SEC Western Division co-championship. Truth really can be stranger than fiction.

The question is whether the Razorbacks can write a sequel to 1998's Disney movie plot. Nutt certainly hopes so. "We want to pick up where we left off at the end of last season," Nutt says. "We hope there is plenty of carryover from last year." On paper, it looks like there is. The Razorbacks have 12 starters and both specialists back from a year ago, including quarterback Clint Stoerner and all-star wide receiver Anthony Lucas. The defense is solid, especially in the secondary. And Nutt has had a year to settle himself into his dream job.

But there are some obstacles, more off the field than on. The Razorbacks were so close last year to a dream season, but Stoerner's fumble in the fourth quarter against Tennessee cost the Hogs more than just the game against the Volunteers. They could never seem to shake the horror of Neyland Stadium and lost two of their last three games, including the Citrus Bowl, 45-31 to a less-than-dominant Michigan team.

Nutt, though, thinks the lessons his team learned last year can be productive ones. "Winning isn't easy," he said. "It wasn't easy last year. It involves sacrifice."

Offense There is no shortage of talent or experience at the skill positions for Arkansas. If he can finally put the Tennessee game behind him, Stoerner has the experience and ability to be the league's best signalcaller. His 2,629 yards a year ago is the best total among returning quarterbacks in the league.

And then there are all the options he has among the five seniors who are back, including Lucas, the Hogs' all-time leader in touchdown receptions. Tight end Joe Dean Davenport, who had 18 catches and a touchdown a year ago, is a real weapon. And then there is the running game, which ranked in the top half of the league last year and returns leading rusher Chrys Chukwuma, plus future star Alvin Ray.

The problem is blockers. Arkansas' offensive line was second in the league in sacks allowed last year (just 19), but only one of the starting five-senior tackle Bobby Williams—is back. The new group will try to draw its inspiration from the late Brandon Burlsworth, whose tragic death this summer in a car crash rocked the entire campus. Burlsworth, a one-time walk-on, died shortly after realizing his dream of being an NFL draft pick.

Spring practice was spent moving, shuffling and rearranging the lineup, and the work isn't done yet. Arkansas signed seven projected offensive linemen in the spring and anyone who can make enough strides in the fall to be useful is going to get the chance to play. Nutt doesn't have any choice. "The group we have is talented, but they haven't been out there much," Nutt says.

Defense The reason Arkansas won nine games a year ago is pretty simple—the defense dominated. The Razorbacks were third in the league in scoring defense, rushing defense and total defense (behind Tennessee and Florida). The Razorbacks were particularly tough against the run, holding opponents to an average of just 95.5 yards a game.

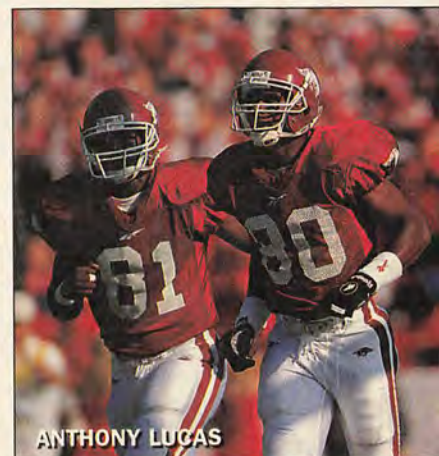
The return of six starters gives Arkansas a good base from which to work, but there are definitely holes, especially on the defensive line. Gone are starters Ryan Hale at nose guard, Melvin Bradley at tackle and C.J. McLain at end. All were solid SEC players. Experience, with the return of leading tackler Kenoy Kennedy at safety and senior David Barrett at corner, is not a problem in the secondary, but depth is. And the linebacking corps, while solid, could see some shuffling on the depth chart before the season opener.

Special Teams Arkansas is going to need some players to step up in this area. Sophomore Eric Parks should take over for Todd Latourette at placekicker, but has game experience booting extra points only. Chris Akin was a capable punter (39.2-yard average), but would like to see the numbers improve. Both return jobs are wide open going into the fall.

New One to Know Nutt had gone into the spring saying that the juggling of the quarterback depth chart behind Stoerner last fall had been a problem and that he wanted to exit the spring with a solid pecking order at the position.

So much for the best laid plans as redshirt freshman Robby Hampton and freshman Gary Brashears, Jr. are virtually bracketed at No. 2. But that might not be a bad thing, especially when it comes to Brashears, who skipped the spring semester of his senior year of high school to sign in January with the Hogs and be in Fayetteville for spring practice. A prep all-American and the No. 2 prospect in the country according to several recruiting publications, Brashears chose the Hogs over Miami (Fla.), Michigan, Florida State and Tennessee after throwing 16 touchdowns as a prep senior. If he can win the No. 2 spot outright in the fall, he might just be the starter for the Hogs by 2000.

Schedule Here is where the Hogs get some big-time help. All three nonconference games (SMU, Northeast Louisiana and Middle Tennessee State) should be wins. Plus, Arkansas doesn't play two of the top three teams in the East (Florida and Georgia) and their two toughest SEC games (Mississippi State and Tennessee) are at home. And they don't go on the road for more than two straight games at any point in the year. In fact, in one stretch, the Hogs play five of six games within the borders of Arkansas.



ANTHONY LUCAS

PROJECTED RECORD: 9-2

Southeastern Conference

LOCATION: Fayetteville, AR
ENROLLMENT: 15,060
STADIUM: Razorback Stadium (49,800)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 9-3
COACH: Houston Nutt
CAREER: 45-25; **HERE:** 9-3
BOWL: Lost Citrus (45-31 to Michigan)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 37

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Clint Stoerner*	6-2	210	Sr.
TB	Chrys Chukwuma*	6-1	207	Sr.
FB	Eric Branch	6-0	224	Jr.
SE	Anthony Lucas*	6-3	198	Sr.
FL	Michael Williams*	5-10	182	Sr.
TE	Joe Dean Davenport*	6-7	257	Sr.
LT	Curtis Sanders	6-5	313	Sr.
LG	Shannon Money	6-4	296	So.
C	Kenny Sandlin	6-3	295	So.
RG	Jeremiah Washburn	6-6	303	Sr.
RT	Bobby Williams*	6-4	325	Sr.
PK	Eric Parks	5-11	205	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Randy Garner*	6-4	250	Jr.
DT	D.J. Cooper	6-3	276	Sr.
NG	Curt Davis	6-3	274	So.
DE	Carlos Hall	6-4	256	So.
LB	J.J. Jones*	6-0	240	Sr.
LB	Jamel Harris*	5-11	226	Sr.
BAN	Jeromy Flowers*	6-0	200	Sr.
ROV	Chris Chalmers	5-10	184	Jr.
CB	David Barrett*	5-10	195	Sr.
FS	Kenoy Kennedy*	6-1	203	Sr.
CB	Ontraia Moss	5-9	185	Sr.
P	Chris Akin*	6-0	199	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Chrys Chukwuma		870	5.8	8
Alvin Ray		669	4.2	7
Eric Branch		64	4.0	1

PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Clint Stoerner		2629	53.5	26	8

RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Michael Williams		44	560	12.7	5
Anthony Lucas		43	1004	23.3	10
Emanuel Smith		25	372	14.9	2
Joe Davenport		18	240	13.3	1
Michael Snowden		10	152	15.2	2

KICKING		Eric Parks, 3 of 3 PATS		
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DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC
Kenoy Kennedy		95	2 sacks, 2 INT
Jeromy Flowers		67	9 TFL, 3 INT
David Barrett		54	5 TFL, 3 INT, 8 PBU
Randy Garner		52	10 TFL, 5 sacks
Quenton Carver		50	9 TFL, 2 sacks

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at SMU	W, 44-17
Sept. 18	Northeast Louisiana	—
Sept. 25	at Alabama	W, 42-6
Oct. 2	at Kentucky	W, 27-20
Oct. 9	MTSU	—
Oct. 16	South Carolina	W, 41-28
Oct. 30	Auburn	W, 24-21
Nov. 6	at Ole Miss	W, 34-0
Nov. 13	Tennessee	L, 24-28
Nov. 20	Mississippi St.	L, 21-22
Nov. 27	at LSU	W, 41-14

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	393.9	5th
Scoring offense	32.6	3rd
Total defense	306.4	3rd
Scoring defense	16.5	3rd

(Rank is SEC ranking)

Southeastern Conference

LOCATION: Tuscaloosa, AL
ENROLLMENT: 19,000
STADIUM: Bryant-Denny Stadium (83,226)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 7-5
COACH: Mike DuBose
CAREER: 11-12; **HERE:** 11-12
BOWL: Lost Music City (38-7 to Virginia Tech)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 39

ALABAMA

CRIMSON TIDE

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Andrew Zow*	6-1	215	So.
TB	Shaun Alexander*	6-0	209	Sr.
FB	Dustin McClintock*	6-3	244	Jr.
WR	Shamari Buchanan	6-2	200	Sr.
WR	Eric Locke	5-9	180	So.
FL	Freddie Milons	5-11	174	So.
LT	Chris Samuels*	6-6	285	Sr.
LG	Griff Redmill*	6-5	290	Jr.
C	Paul Hogan*	6-4	275	Jr.
RG	Kenric Lott	6-5	310	Sr.
RT	Will Cuthbert*	6-6	320	Jr.
K	Ryan Pflugner*	5-11	184	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Kindal Morehead*	6-3	289	So.
DT	Cornelius Griffin*	6-3	290	Sr.
DT	Jamie Carter*	6-4	314	Sr.
DE	Kenny Smith*	6-5	276	Jr.
OLB	Miguel Merritt	6-0	220	Sr.
MLB	Travis Carroll*	6-4	226	Jr.
OLB	Darius Gilbert	6-2	220	So.
CB	Milo Lewis	6-0	190	Jr.
CB	Kecalf Bailey*	5-10	158	Jr.
SS	Marcus Spencer*	6-2	193	So.
FS	Tony Dixon*	6-1	193	Jr.
P	Patrick Morgan	6-0	189	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Shaun Alexander	1,178	4.6	13
Eric Locke	48	6.0	0
Arvin Richard	47	3.9	0

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Andrew Zow	1,969	55.9	11	7

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Shaun Alexander	26	385	14.8	4
Freddie Milons	19	213	11.2	0
Eric Locke	14	134	9.6	0
Dustin McClintock	8	71	8.9	0

KICKING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Ryan Pflugner, 11 of 22 FG (long 55); 27 for 27 PAT				

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Travis Carroll	76	16 TFL, 3 sacks
Tony Dixon	75	2 TFL, 1 INT
Marcus Spencer	69	7 TFL, 4 INT
Cornelius Griffin	58	10 TFL

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Vanderbilt	W, 32-7
Sept. 11	Houston	—
Sept. 18	Louisiana Tech	—
Sept. 25	Arkansas	L, 6-42
Oct. 2	at Florida	L, 10-16
Oct. 16	at Ole Miss	W, 20-17
Oct. 23	Tennessee	L, 18-35
Oct. 30	Southern Miss	W, 30-20
Nov. 6	LSU	W, 22-16
Nov. 13	Mississippi State	L, 14-26
Nov. 20	at Auburn	W, 31-17

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	337.0	9th
Scoring offense	22.2	9th
Total defense	369.0	8th
Scoring defense	18.09	7th

(Rank is SEC ranking)

The last couple of years have been pretty gleeful for the anti-fans of the Alabama football program. The Crimson Tide, after spending most of this decade as one of the dominant teams in the SEC, suddenly became mortal the last few years because of severe scholarship limitations resulting from NCAA probation. Alabama posted a 4-7 record in 1997 and went 7-5 a year ago, and has losing streaks going to archrivals like Tennessee, Mississippi State and Arkansas.

Third-year coach Mike DuBose took a lot of the criticism for the problems, whether it was deserved or not. He did make some mistakes, especially in coaching hires his first season, but in all fairness it's tough to win without players, and with a combined recruiting class of just 29 freshmen joining the program in 1996 and 1997, there just weren't many bodies to go around. That meant little, though, to Tide fans who mourn losses of 42-6 to Arkansas and 35-18 to Tennessee like the loss of family members.

It's not likely there will be many of those kind of bitter memories about this season. The Tide returns 17 starters on offense and defense and had one of the best recruiting classes in the nation back in February. With just 39 lettermen returning, depth could still be a problem unless some of the true freshmen can come through, but DuBose is genuinely enthused about his team's prospects this season. "I like this football team an awful lot," DuBose said. "I like the work ethic. I like the attitude. I like this coaching staff. I am excited about the future of Alabama football."

Offense DuBose does not believe that Alabama has a quarterback controversy. Instead, he prefers to look at it as a "competitive situation between two fine football players." That may be a bit naive, since the question of whether incumbent sophomore starter Andrew Zow could fend off redshirt freshman phenom Tyler Watts gripped the entire state throughout spring practice. Zow started the last seven games of the season for Alabama and threw for 1,969 yards and 11 touchdowns, while Watts was one of the country's top-rated prep signalcallers in 1997 but sat out last year to learn the offense.

In the end, nothing was settled in the spring and DuBose is admitting that there may not be a No. 1 starter at the end of August, either. "Unless something unforeseen happens, we will go into the fall playing two quarterbacks in the first two or three games."

But it's not as if the passing game will have to carry the offense. Tailback Shaun Alexander had the chance to go to the NFL after rushing for 1,178 yards and 13 touchdowns as a junior, but opted to stay for one more season. Alexander is a big, punishing back with speed who can legitimately carry the ball 20-30 times a game. The fact that five starters return on the offensive line should mean that the Tide should be able to move the ball on the ground whether they can throw it or not.

Defense During Alabama's run of four straight 10-win seasons back in the early part of this decade, the teams were built around a punishing defense. In fact, in all four of those years the Tide was first in the SEC in one of the top four defensive categories (scoring, rushing, passing or total). The depth problems associated with the probation wouldn't allow Alabama to keep that trend up, though, and last year the Tide was an uncharacteristic seventh in the league in scoring defense and eighth in total defense.

That's not likely to happen this year, though, with eight starters back on defense. The Tide will be especially strong on the defensive line, with junior end Kenny Smith a potential All-American and his mate at the position, Kindal Morehead, not being far behind. The secondary

will have to recover from the loss of All-SEC safety Fernando Bryant, and two starters—Trevis Smith and Steve Stanley—have to be replaced in the linebacking corps.

The other returning starter, Travis Carroll, did not participate in the spring because of surgery and might be limited in the fall. But overall, the talent is stronger and the depth more plentiful on this side of the ball than it has been in Tuscaloosa in a few years.

Special Teams When a punter can be a weapon for a football team, it's a huge plus. That's exactly what Alabama had last year in Daniel Pope, who led the league in punting averaging at 44.0 yards a kick. He graduated, however, and will be sorely missed. Other than that, though, the special teams are in decent shape. Ryan Pflugner is back at placekicker, but needs to improve on his 11-of-22 field goal efficiency in 1998. Arvin Richard should handle both punt returns (5.9 yards last year) and kickoff returns (23.8).

New One to Know Fernando Bryant has been a fixture in the Alabama secondary for four years. But after registering 51 tackles and a picking off a pair of passes as a senior, the Jacksonville Jaguars made him the 26th overall pick of the NFL draft last April. Bryant's replacement in the secondary is likely to be Milo Lewis, a JUCO transfer who enrolled in school in January to be able to participate in spring drills. Lewis may not have any big-time college experience, but drew high praise during the spring from DuBose, who said he was "pleased" with Lewis' development.

Schedule This is almost the perfect schedule for a team like Alabama that needs to develop confidence. Three of the first four games and seven overall are either in Tuscaloosa or Birmingham, with Arkansas the only real test early. The trip to Florida is probably not winnable, but games at Ole Miss and Auburn are. And four straight home games late in the year against tough opponents like Tennessee, LSU and Mississippi State will make things a lot easier. With this kind of slate, Alabama ought to challenge for the SEC West title and win no less than eight games.



VINCENT LAFORGE/ALLSPORT

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-3

LSU

TIGERS

Could there have been a more disappointing team in the country last season than LSU?

It's not just that the Tigers were universally picked as the favorite in the SEC's Western Division—not a single national magazine nor the media who cover the conference had the Tigers anywhere but at the top—it's that the rest of the division looked to be weak as well. Alabama was still dealing with the effects of scholarship limitations, Arkansas had had back to back 4-7 seasons, Auburn, the defending champ, had no quarterback and no running game, and Ole Miss and Mississippi State, were, well, Ole Miss and Mississippi State. That anyone but LSU would represent the West at the conference title game in Atlanta and December seemed ludicrous.

But that was before the Tigers imploded in the months of October and November. LSU started out the year 3-0, but suffered a one-point loss to Georgia Oct. 3 in Tiger Stadium. From there, the rest of the year was a downward spiral as the Tigers lost seven of their final eight games and finished fifth in the West. Gerry DiNardo, hired in 1995 after making the Vanderbilt program competitive, received the first real criticism of his LSU career. And he could hardly blame the LSU fans, who had reason to believe that the Tigers could challenge for a BCS bowl, maybe even the national title. "When you're a 4-7 team, you're clearly in a crisis," he admitted.

That's why it's hard to believe that the Tigers will be able to turn it around completely this year, despite the fact that 17 starters are back on offense and defense. Quarterback Herb Tyler is gone, as is the league's leading rusher a year ago, Kevin Faulk. Discipline has been a problem in the last year and confidence can't be great. DiNardo has promised to shake things up. "If we go into next season doing (what we've) been doing, offensively, defensively and in the kicking game, we'd be fools," he said. "I think you have to change something. Whether it's wholesale changes or smaller, that's the tricky part."

Offense DiNardo is saying for public consumption that the quarterback position is wide open and a decision won't be made about a starter until perhaps the second scrimmage of fall camp. But it sure looks like Josh Booty has the edge. Booty, the former Louisiana prep legend, finally got out of his pro baseball contract with the Florida Marlins, started school and was in spring practice for LSU. And close to 20,000 showed up for the spring football festival to watch him. Even DiNardo couldn't help but rave about having Booty around.

"Before he enrolled, I knew he would be a team guy and would really fit into the program," he said. "But I didn't know he would be such a terrific student of the game."

Whether the starting quarterback is Booty, Craig Nall or Rohan Davey, there will be plenty of offense for them to work with. Both starting wide receivers are back—junior split end Abram Booty and senior flanker Larry Foster—along with three starters on the offensive line. The biggest problem would appear to be a replacement for Faulk, who accounted for almost a third of LSU's total offense a year ago. But senior Rondell Mealey, despite missing spring practice with an injury, should step into the position without missing a beat.

Defense There might not have been a more hated man in the state of Louisiana last year than Lou Tepper. The first-year LSU defensive coordinator had replaced Carl Reece, who had left for Texas after directing the Tigers to a first-place finish in the league in scoring defense in 1997.

After decent performances in the first three games by the defense last year, the wheels came off against Georgia and the lug nuts were never found. The Tigers gave up four touchdowns or more five times last year and

DiNardo found himself defending the hiring of Tepper to LSU fans. "Long range, I've never felt better about what we are doing defensively," he said.

Apparently so, because DiNardo didn't give in to the pressure and Tepper is still the defensive coordinator. The defensive scheme, however, has undergone some changes. It's still called a conventional 3-4, but isn't conventional at all in the way it lines up players—the eight starters who are back will have slightly different assignments than a year ago. Even still, the best player the Tigers have on defense is corner Mark Roman, who had 82 tackles and three interceptions a year ago at free safety. Defensive end Jarvis Green was on the SEC All-Freshman team after producing 50 tackles, 17 of them behind the line, and eight sacks.

Special Teams It's a mixed bag for LSU in this area. Punter Corey Gibbs was second in the conference last year in average at 44 yards, and if he can sustain it this year, he can be a real weapon for the Tigers. Placekicker Danny Boyd is back as well, but that's almost a liability if he is going to be 1-for-4 in field goals and 25-of-32 in PATs. Those numbers have to improve. Faulk handled both punt returns and kickoff returns; look for at least one of those jobs to be turned over to Mealey.

New One to Know Josh Booty is not really new to LSU fans, but he is new to the LSU program. He played baseball in the Florida Marlins' system for five years. But as his baseball career floundered, he thought more and more about joining his brother Abram, as he initially intended to, at LSU. After reaching a settlement with the Marlins on his signing bonus, he enrolled in school in January and took part in spring drills.

As anyone who had been away from the game as he had might, he had problems with reads, but his talent promises a tremendous upside. He led his unit on the game-winning drive in LSU's spring game. Booty has promised to have the offense broken down by the time fall practice starts and DiNardo knows he will have a decision to make at quarterback between the ability of Booty and the limited experience of Nall and Davey.

Schedule The first month of the season is perfect for a team that will be trying to build confidence. San Jose State, North Texas and Auburn should allow LSU to exit September with a perfect record. From there, though, it gets a lot tougher. Only two of the five October games are at home, and trips to Georgia and Mississippi State will be difficult. Playing at Alabama, though, has historically been easier for the Tigers than it might seem. If LSU can avoid a meltdown at midseason this year, then they could go into their season finale at home against Arkansas with decent bowl aspirations.



MARK ROMAN

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

LOCATION: Baton Rouge, LA
ENROLLMENT: 29,881
STADIUM: Tiger Stadium (79,940)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 4-7
COACH: Gerry DiNardo
CAREER: 49-41-1; **HERE:** 30-16-1
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 34

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Josh Booty	6-3	235	So.
FB	Tommy Banks*	6-0	255	Jr.
TB	Rondell Mealey	6-0	205	Sr.
SE	Abram Booty*	6-2	185	Jr.
FL	Larry Foster*	5-10	188	Sr.
TE	Kyle Kipps*	6-5	261	So.
LT	Louis Williams*	6-6	300	Jr.
LG	Al Jackson	6-3	313	Sr.
C	John Compton	6-3	287	Jr.
RG	Trey Langley*	6-5	300	Jr.
RT	Brandon Winey*	6-7	295	Jr.
K	Danny Boyd*	6-0	213	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DT	Johnny Mitchell*	6-5	315	Sr.
NG	Kareem Mitchell	6-4	267	Jr.
DE	Jarvis Green*	6-3	261	So.
LB	Theo Williams	6-3	245	Sr.
LB	Charles Smith	6-2	235	Sr.
LB	Thomas Dunson*	6-3	230	So.
LB	Jamal Hill*	6-2	219	Jr.
CB	Mark Roman*	6-0	187	Sr.
CB	Damien Woods*	5-10	185	Sr.
FS	Ryan Clark	6-0	183	So.
SS	Clarence LeBlanc*	6-3	200	Sr.
P	Corey Gibbs*	6-0	191	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING			
	YDS	AVG	TD
Rondell Mealey	334	4.9	4
Larry Foster	46	9.2	0
Tommy Banks	41	2.7	0
LaVar Johnson	30	4.3	0

PASSING			
	YDS	PCT	TD INT
Craig Nall	340	49.1	0 2

RECEIVING			
	REC	YDS	AVG TD
Larry Foster	56	722	12.9 4
Abram Booty	54	779	14.4 5
Reggie Robinson	21	308	14.7 1
Kyle Kipps	16	180	11.3 3

KICKING
 Danny Boyd, 1 of 4 FG (long 30), 25 for 32 PATs

DEFENSE		
	TKLS	MISC
Mark Roman	84	5 TFL, 3 INT
Clarence LeBlanc	70	7 TFL, 2 INT
Charles Smith	55	5 TFL, 1 sack

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	San Jose State	—
Sept. 11	North Texas	—
Sept. 18	Auburn	W, 31-19
Oct. 2	at Georgia	L, 27-28
Oct. 9	Florida	L, 10-22
Oct. 16	at Kentucky	L, 36-39
Oct. 23	at Mississippi State	W, 41-6
Oct. 30	Ole Miss	L, 31-37 (OT)
Nov. 6	at Alabama	L, 16-22
Nov. 13	Houston	—
Nov. 27	Arkansas	L, 14-41

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	384.6	7th
Scoring offense	30.6	5th
Total defense	408.7	11th
Scoring defense	25.4	9th

(Rank is SEC ranking)

Southeastern Conference

LOCATION: Oxford, MS
ENROLLMENT: 13,315
STADIUM: Vaught-Hemingway Stadium (42,577)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 7-5
COACH: David Cutcliffe
CAREER: 1-0; **HERE:** 1-0
BOWL: Won Independence (35-18 over Texas Tech)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 51

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Romaro Miller*	6-2	190	Jr.
TB	Deuce McAllister*	6-2	215	Jr.
FB	Charles Stackhouse	6-2	212	So.
WR	Grant Heard*	6-3	190	Sr.
WR	Cory Peterson*	6-3	195	Sr.
TE	Adam Bettis	6-2	230	Sr.
LT	Tutan Reyes*	6-4	285	Sr.
LG	Terrence Metcalf	6-3	291	So.
C	Charlie Perkins	6-2	290	Jr.
RG	Keydrick Vincent*	6-5	345	Jr.
RT	Todd Wade*	6-8	320	Sr.
K	Carlisle McGee*	6-0	200	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Derrick Burgess*	6-2	260	Jr.
DT	Kendrick Clancy*	6-2	265	Sr.
DT	Tyler Williams	6-2	270	Sr.
DE	Shane Elam	6-1	235	Jr.
OLB	Ronnie Heard*	6-3	205	Sr.
MLB	Armegis Spearman*	6-1	245	Sr.
OLB	Eddie Strong*	6-3	230	So.
CB	Justin Coleman	5-10	175	So.
CB	Timothy Strickland*	5-10	185	Sr.
SS	Kenny Woods*	6-2	205	Sr.
FS	Anthony Magee*	6-0	175	Jr.
P	Reagan King*	6-3	223	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Deuce McAllister	1082	5.1	11	
Joe Gunn	546	4.4	7	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Romaro Miller	2273	56.4	11	11
David Morris	89	39.3	0	3
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Cory Peterson	41	601	14.7	4
Grant Heard	40	559	14.0	4
Sheldon Morris	20	190	9.5	0
Deuce McAllister	18	154	8.6	0
Ken Lucas	12	152	12.7	0

KICKING				
Carlisle McGee, 7 of 9 FGs (long 44), 9 of 10 PATs				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Armegis Spearman	84	2 TFL, 2 sacks		
Eddie Strong	66	4 TFL, 2.5 sacks		
Kenny Woods	65	5 PBU, 2 sacks		
Anthony McGee	55	3 INT		
Kendrick Clancy	55	15 TFL, 4 fumbles caus.		
Timothy Strickland	53	18 PBU, 3 TFL		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Memphis	W, 30-10
Sept. 11	Arkansas State	W, 30-17
Sept. 18	Vanderbilt	W, 30-6
Sept. 25	at Auburn	L, 0-17
Oct. 2	at South Carolina	W, 30-28
Oct. 9	Tulane	—
Oct. 16	Alabama	L, 17-20 (OT)
Oct. 30	at LSU	W, 37-31 (OT)
Nov. 6	Arkansas	L, 0-34
Nov. 20	Georgia	L, 17-24
Nov. 25	at Mississippi State	L, 6-28

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	392.7	6th
Scoring offense	22.3	8th
Total defense	331.4	6th
Scoring defense	23.3	8th

(Rank is SEC ranking)

MISSISSIPPI

REBELS

The Ole Miss football program was at a critical juncture last December. Tommy Tuberville, who had been on countless schools' coaching wish lists for years was finally leaving for Auburn. The situation had been poorly handled by Tuberville, who issued denial after denial before suddenly showing up on the Plains. The Rebel family was fractured, with some wondering why a better effort wasn't made to keep Tuberville, and still others concerned that the school would go out and try to hire another up-and-comer who would see Oxford as nothing more than a place to try to pad their resume. Athletic director John Shafer had to make a hire quickly, and it had to be someone who was recognizable enough to heal the wounds that Tuberville's departure had opened, while at the same time make it clear that the school was looking for a long-term solution for its football program rather than a quick fix.

Enter David Cutcliffe, the offensive coordinator at Tennessee. He was hot, having been a finalist for both the Arkansas and Kentucky jobs in recent years. Plus, he was very much a known quantity to Ole Miss fans, having been one of the primary reasons Peyton Manning overlooked his dad Archie's alma mater for the Vols. And the Manning family overwhelmingly approved, which all but assured that the youngest, Eli, would sign those scholarship papers in February.

And as an added bonus, Cutcliffe even appears sincere when he says that the Ole Miss job is the only one he ever wants. "It's easy to fall in love with Oxford," said Cutcliffe, who coached the Rebels to a 35-18 win over Texas Tech in the Independence Bowl. "The people care about their university and are very intense about it. The community is the type of community where you would want to raise children. There is a great sense of pride in that entire university and a great football tradition. All those things were greatly appealing to me."

As was Ole Miss' overall situation. The Rebels return 17 starters on offense and defense from a team that was just 27 points away from winning a share of the Western Division title. "This is truly a new beginning and an exciting time," Cutcliffe said.

Offense Cutcliffe managed the offense around which Peyton Manning set every career passing record in the book. So it should stand to reason that the Rebels ought to be able to put some points on the board this season. That would seem even more apparent when one considers that every starter at the skill positions returns.

Quarterback Romaro Miller should benefit the most from working with Cutcliffe, who had a signal-caller with a similar style last season in Tee Martin at Tennessee. In fact, Miller couldn't have been happier with the hire, since he desperately wanted to sign with the Vols out of high school so he could learn under Cutcliffe. Now he gets his wish, and the first order of business for Cutcliffe and quarterbacks coach Kurt Roper will be to alter Miller's touchdown pass-to-interception ratio, which was 11-11 a year ago.

But Miller won't have the entire offense on his shoulders. Junior running back Deuce McAllister was fourth in the league in rushing last year, gaining 1,082 yards and scoring seven touchdowns. Senior

wide receivers Cory Peterson and Grant Heard give the Rebels legitimate outside threats. Tight end Rufus French was a big loss, but can be overcome. And the offensive line, which returns three starters, might actually be better this year.

Defense All those years of playing young kids because of scholarship limitations are finally beginning to pay off for the Rebels. Nine starters are back on this side of the ball, and six of them are seniors with loads of experience. Depth, if there are no injury problems, won't be the killer that it has been the last several years. It all adds up to a defense that has the potential to better its output in both scoring (23.3 points) and yards (331.4) from a year ago.

The strength is in the linebacking corps, where the top two leading tacklers, Armegis Spearman and Eddie Strong, are back. Spearman, a senior who had 84 stops a year ago, is being touted as a possible All-SEC candidate, while Strong had four tackles for loss and two-and-half sacks as a freshman.

But there are positives in other areas as well. Kendrick Clancy is a terror at defensive tackle, with more than a third of his 55 tackles last year coming behind the line of scrimmage. Cornerback Timothy Strickland is to be avoided, since he broke up 18 passes a year ago. The Rebels are a defensive end and a mate for Strickland at corner away from having one of the better units in the league.

Special Teams Both kickers are back, and both should improve their numbers from 1998. Placekicker Carlisle McGee kicked seven of nine field goals and nine of 10 extra points, and should do better now that he is firmly in the No. 1 spot. Punter Reagan King had a decent year as a sophomore, but needs to pump up that 38.3-yard average. The return game is in good hands with Peterson (11 yards a punt) and Maurice Flournoy (20.1 per kickoff).

New One to Know At this moment, there is not a quarterback controversy at Ole Miss, but then again, a game hasn't been played yet. Miller should be firmly in the No. 1 role. But if he falters, don't be surprised if more than a few Rebel fans start clamoring to take a look at Eli Manning's arm. The son of former Ole Miss star Archie and brother of former Tennessee and current Colts star Peyton, Eli is said to have the best physical tools of all three. It's likely Manning will redshirt, since Cutcliffe is not the sort that would give in to such pressure. But if by midseason the offense is sputtering, the urge to take the new model out for a test drive will be there.

Schedule It could be worse. A lot worse. All three non-conference games—Memphis, Arkansas State and Tulane—are winnable, especially with the Green Wave coming to Oxford. Three tough SEC games—Alabama, Arkansas and Georgia—are all at home and, in fact, are in the middle of a five-game stretch where the Rebels play four times at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium. The season finale against Mississippi State is in Starkville, but by that time Ole Miss could be well on its way to a winning season and a third-straight bowl game.

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

MISSISSIPPI STATE

BULLDOGS

Southeastern Conference

LOCATION: Starkville, MS
ENROLLMENT: 15,645
STADIUM: Scott Field (40,656)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 8-5
COACH: Jackie Sherrill
CAREER: 154-87-4; **HERE:** 49-42-2
BOWL: Lost Cotton (38-11 to Texas)
LETTERMAN RETURNING: 46

There are two schools of thought as to why Mississippi State won the Western Division last season. The first says that the Bulldogs were simply a very good team. After all, they did win eight games, were 4-1 against the rest of their division and were less than a quarter away from beating Tennessee, the eventual national champion. Not bad, especially in a league that is traditionally as rugged as the SEC.

The other theory is a little more cynical and postulates that Mississippi State backed into the SEC title game by ending up with the least bad record in a puny division. Few would dispute the relative weakness of the rest of the West, with the exception of Arkansas, which imploded after losing to the Volunteers in November. LSU, which pulled off one of the all-time choke jobs after being the heavy favorite in the West going into the year, nevertheless beat the Bulldogs' butt in. And then there was the debacle against Texas in the Cotton Bowl. The truth is probably somewhere in between.

So what does that mean for this season? Well, if Mississippi State truly was a good team last year, it would stand to reason that the Bulldogs could at least be decent this year. Nine starters do return, including seven from a defense that allowed less than three touchdowns a game last year. There are only a pair of full-time starters back on offense, but one of them is quarterback Wayne Madkin, who had one of the best freshman seasons in Mississippi State history. And a total of 46 returning lettermen gives the Bulldogs comparable numbers to the rest of the SEC. But if State was deserving only because of the failings of others, then an Arkansas with a year to stew and a resurgent Alabama could make it difficult for the Bulldogs to defend their title.

MSU coach Jackie Sherrill, though, believes that the Bulldogs can prove their critics wrong. "The biggest asset from last season is that we have had success, and our players know what it takes to win and win a championship," he said. "It has caused us to refocus our priorities."

Offense Saying that there are just two starters back on offense is a bit deceiving. Yes, there are only two if your definition of "starter" is someone who began more than half a team's games the previous year. By that interpretation, Madkin and left tackle Floyd Womack are all there is. It could be worse, though, because Madkin, a sophomore, took over the starting role in the sixth game of the season and threw for 1,532 yards and 11 touchdowns, should do nothing but improve this season.

Plus, he has seniors Matt Wyatt and Rob Morgan, who have 16 career starts between them, to back him up. Floyd Womack, whose nickname is "Porkchop," graded out 80 percent or better in eight of the 11 regular season games as a sophomore at left tackle. He could be an all-star.

But if by starter you mean anyone who has begun a game at any point in their career, then the Bulldogs are in a bit better shape. By that reckoning, senior wide receivers Kelvin Love and Matt Butler are veterans, as are senior tight end Terrance McCaskey and tailback Chris Rainey. The one with the biggest shoes to fill is Rainey, who takes over for 1,300-yard rusher James Johnson. With just one upperclassman on the depth chart (plus the return of

Madkin) and a new offensive coordinator in former South Carolina coach Sparky Woods, look for the emphasis on offense to shift somewhat from the ground to the air, especially early.

Defense The formations and schemes of defensive coordinator Joe Lee Dunn are tough enough when a defense is young. But give him a bunch of veterans, especially in the secondary, so that he can turn his front seven loose with the possibility of little in the way of repercussion from the long ball, and Dunn's defenses can be downright scary.

That's exactly the situation Dunn has going into this season. MSU should have one of the best defensive backfields in the league, if not the country, with all four starters back. Senior cornerback Robert Bean had five interceptions a year ago and has definite NFL potential. That kind of experience behind them should allow players like tackle Kevin Sluder and end Cornell Menafee, who had 11 tackles for loss between them last year, play with even more abandon this year.

Dunn can see the potential. "Last year at this time, we were worried about who was going to step up and be play-makers on the defense," Dunn said. "This year, most of our playmakers are coming back. We have a chance to be better than we were last year."

Special Teams Punting should be no problem in the hands of senior Jeff Walker, who has averaged nearly 44 yards a kick over his career. After him, things are not so great. Scott Westerfield is the only placekicker on the depth chart, and he has been on the bench for a year after transferring from junior college. Plus, the departure of return ace Kevin Prentiss (24.1 kickoffs, 13.0 punts) leaves a sizeable hole in that phase of the game.

New One to Know Edward Smith had what could only be called a dream season from his outside defensive end position. Smith had 127 tackles (tied for second in the SEC) and had a league-high 12 sacks. He was a terror for every Bulldog opponent to contain. However, the fact that he was so productive means that his replacement won't be all that experienced. In the case of Connor Stephens, though, that doesn't mean he won't be talented. The former high school All-American saw action is highly-regarded by the Bulldog coaching staff and did manage to find his way into 13 games last year. If he can give MSU a solid year at Smith's old position, it could go a long way in ensuring a productive season for the defense.

Schedule This schedule is made-to-order for the Bulldogs to be right in the thick of things in November. The first four games are at home, including a tough test against Oklahoma State. Two potentially difficult games against LSU and Kentucky in the middle of the year are at home. If the Bulldogs can get that far without much damage, then the confidence could be sky-high by the time trips to Alabama and Arkansas roll around in late November.

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Wayne Madkin*	6-4	214	So.
TB	Chris Rainey	5-8	197	Sr.
FB	Justin Griffith	5-11	220	Fr.
WR	Kelvin Love	6-3	195	So.
WR	Matt Butler	6-2	196	Sr.
TE	Terrance McCaskey	6-6	262	Sr.
LT	Floyd Womack*	6-3	336	Jr.
LG	Kenric Fairchild	6-4	318	So.
C	Paul Mooney	6-8	325	Sr.
RG	Michael Fair	6-3	296	Jr.
RT	Wes Shivers	6-7	325	Sr.
K	Scott Westerfield	5-10	182	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Cornell Menafee*	6-2	244	Sr.
DT	Kevin Sluder*	6-4	270	Sr.
NG	Darius Brown	6-0	262	Jr.
DT	John Hilliard*	6-3	278	Sr.
DE	Connor Stephens	6-4	241	Sr.
LB	Edward Yeates	6-0	241	Jr.
LB	Barrin Simpson	5-11	226	Sr.
CB	Robert Bean*	6-0	175	Sr.
CB	Kendall Roberson*	6-0	205	Sr.
SS	Tim Nelson*	5-9	176	Sr.
FS	Kenzaki Jones*	6-1	205	Sr.
P	Jeff Walker*	5-11	217	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Dicenzo Miller	290	5.3	1	
Chris Rainey	167	4.2	1	
Rod Gibson	26	2.9	0	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Wayne Madkin	1532	.482	11	9
Matt Wyatt	211	.442	0	4
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Kelvin Love	9	266	29.6	2
Matt Butler	9	103	11.4	0
Chris Rainey	6	41	6.8	0
Terrance McCaskey	4	61	15.2	0
KICKING				
None				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Barrin Cooper	82	1 TFL, 1 INT		
Kevin Sluder	77	7 TFL, 2 fumb. rec.		
Cornell Menafee	75	4 TFL, 3 sacks		
Tim Nelson	68	2 TFL, 3 sacks		
Ashley Cooper	55	7 TFL, 2 sacks		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Middle Tenn. St.	—
Sept. 11	Memphis	W, 14-6
Sept. 18	Oklahoma St.	L, 23-42
Sept. 25	South Carolina	W, 38-0
Oct. 2	at Vanderbilt	W, 42-0
Oct. 9	at Auburn	W, 38-21
Oct. 23	LSU	L, 6-41
Nov. 4	Kentucky	L, 35-37
Nov. 13	at Alabama	W, 26-14
Nov. 20	at Arkansas	W, 22-21
Nov. 25	Ole Miss	W, 28-6

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	322.5	10th
Scoring offense	28.3	6th
Total defense	312.9	5th
Scoring defense	18.2	5th

(Rank is SEC ranking)

Southeastern Conference

LOCATION: Auburn, AL
ENROLLMENT: 21,775
STADIUM: Jordan-Hare Stadium (85,214)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Tommy Tuberville
CAREER: 25-20; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 51

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Gabe Gross*	6-3	197	So.
FB	Heath Evans*	6-0	230	So.
RB	Demontray Carter*	5-10	187	Jr.
WR	Brandon White	6-0	189	So.
WR	Joe Whitt	5-10	169	So.
TE	Jack Schwieger*	6-5	251	Sr.
LT	Jeno James*	6-4	303	Sr.
LG	Kendall Simmons*	6-3	318	Jr.
C	Cole Cubelic*	6-3	295	Jr.
RG	Mike Pucillo	6-4	315	So.
RT	Colin Sears*	6-3	286	Jr.
K	Rob Bironas*	6-0	197	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Marcus Washington*	6-4	240	Sr.
DT	Jeff Dunlap*	6-5	275	Jr.
DT	Jimmy Brumbaugh*	6-1	294	Sr.
DE	Leonardo Carson*	6-3	282	Sr.
OLB	Dave Beasley	6-2	224	Sr.
MLB	Tavarreus Pounds*	6-0	240	So.
OLB	James Callier	6-0	220	So.
CB	Larry Casher*	5-11	268	Jr.
SS	Rob Pate*	6-3	201	Jr.
FS	Adlai Trone	5-9	174	Sr.
CB	Antwoine Nolan*	5-9	188	Sr.
P	Damon Duvall	6-0	167	Fr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING			
	YDS	AVG	TD
Michael Burks	483	3.2	0
Demontray Carter	406	3.7	2
Gabe Gross	97	1.4	2

PASSING			
	YDS	PCT	TD INT
Gabe Gross	1222	44.7	7 12
Ben Leard	703	47.7	4 7

RECEIVING			
	REC	YDS	AVG TD
Clifton Robinson	42	672	16.0 0
Michael Burks	9	58	6.4 1
Heath Evans	7	151	21.6 1
Rusty Williams	7	52	7.4 0

KICKING
 Robert Bironas, 12 of 16 FGs (long 49),
 18 for 18 PATs

DEFENSE		
	TKLS	MISC
Leonardo Carson	90	8 TFL, 8.5 sacks
Rob Pate	70	4 TFL, 2 INT
James Callier	64	3 TFL
Tavarreus Pounds	58	1 PBU
Haven Fields	52	3 TFL, 2 INT

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Appalachian State	—
Sept. 11	Idaho	—
Sept. 18	at LSU	L, 19-31
Sept. 25	Ole Miss	W, 17-0
Oct. 2	at Tennessee	L, 9-17
Oct. 9	Mississippi State	L, 21-38
Oct. 16	Florida	L, 3-24
Oct. 30	Arkansas	L, 21-24
Nov. 6	Central Florida	W, 10-6
Nov. 13	at Georgia	L, 17-28
Nov. 20	Alabama	L, 17-31

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	270.2	11th
Scoring offense	15.1	11th
Total defense	306.7	4th
Scoring defense	21.4	6th

(Rank is SEC ranking)

AUBURN

TIGERS

How does a program fall so far so fast? This time a year ago, Auburn was coming off a successful 10-3 season in 1997, its first Western Division title and a win over Clemson in the Peach Bowl. Yes, there were expected to be problems last year—quarterback and team savior Dameyune Craig had to be replaced and the running game desperately needed help—but this was the Auburn we were talking about. This was a team which had a successful coach in Terry Bowden, had suffered just one losing season in the 1990s and were just five years removed from an undefeated season. Surely any possible potholes could be filled without much trouble.

Surely not. The Tigers' defense was considered to be the strength of the team, but should have been better than the 21 points a game it gave up. Auburn had problems scoring from the season's start, and by the Tennessee game had a quarterback controversy to deal with. But those were minor obstacles compared to Bowden's sudden resignation at midseason. It was no secret that Bowden didn't get along with athletic director David Housel and there were more than a few among the Auburn family who were openly anti-Bowden. But even as Auburn struggled, it was assumed that Bowden would at least finish the season, and there is at least some reason to believe that he would have been given at least another year to turn things around.

It wasn't to be, though. Defensive coordinator Bill Oliver, who took over the team on an interim basis, couldn't stop the bleeding, and Auburn stumbled to a 3-8 record, its worst since 1952. Enter Tommy Tuberville, who managed to keep Ole Miss afloat for four years despite horrific scholarship losses due to NCAA probation. There is some material to work with (17 returning starters on offense and defense), but the quarterback situation hasn't improved, the running game is still substandard and the wide receiver position is a wasteland. Still, Tuberville finds it difficult to hide his excitement. "Auburn is the place where you can win championships and we plan on doing just that," he said. Just not in 1999.

Offense Ben Leard was considered the odds-on favorite to replace Craig last year and began the season in the starter's role. But when he floundered, then suffered a back injury, then-freshman Gabe Gross stepped in and at times was able to move the ball. He threw for 1,222 yards and scrambled for 97 more and was usually the Tigers' only offensive threat. Leard, though, isn't out of the picture this season by a long shot. Nothing was settled in spring—because Gross missed a lot of practice time due to baseball—and Tuberville won't make a decision until fall practice. But it will come early. "I want them to know they are the starter and let it have time to sink in," he said.

The rest of the offense looks a lot better on paper than it does in reality. There are nine starters back, with the only holes at wide receiver and at offensive guard. However, they are pretty big holes. The wide receiver position is a mess, even more so considering that junior Clifton Robinson, who is the only wide receiver who has shown he can play on the SEC level, was arrested for second-degree rape during the spring. His status is still up-in-the-air, but it doesn't look good for his return. And that offensive line only blocked enough holes for the backs to stumble for 1,032 yards last year, last in the league. No significant improvement was made in the spring, leaving Tuberville to lament that "We've still got a long way to go."

Defense It's a good bet that Auburn will be in a lot of low-scoring games this season, because this defense probably isn't going to give up many points. Eight starters return, including defensive end Leonardo Carson, one of the best in the league. Carson registered a team-high 90

tackles last year and had 8.5 sacks. He will be double-teamed this season on virtually every play.

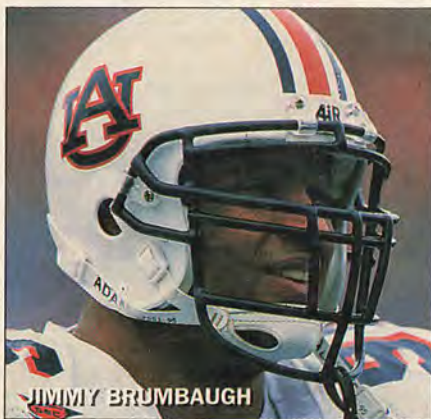
But as strong as Carson and the rest of the defensive line will be, the real strength of the defense will likely be the secondary, which returns three members from a unit that was second in the league in pass defense a year ago. Strong safety Rob Pate and corners Larry Casher and Antoine Nolan combined for six interceptions, and the defense as a whole had a league-high 19 picks. Any team that throws on Auburn does so at its own risk.

Special Teams Rob Bironas didn't have many chances to score last year, but when he did, he made the most of them. He made 12 of 16 field goals a year ago, and was perfect on all 18 extra point tries. He should improve this year. Punter Jeremy Zills, however, must be replaced, and the early favorite is redshirt freshman David Duvall. Clifton Robinson will probably handle punt returns again, and Markeith Cooper will take kick-offs. Both are solid performers.

New One to Know Auburn has had a history over the last few years of producing some top notch offensive linemen. Players like Victor Riley, Willie Anderson, Wayne Gandy, Eddie Blake and Ed King have all won All-SEC honors in the 1990s. The next name to add to that may very well be Colin Sears. The 6-3, 286-pound junior from Russellville, Ala., has certainly proven versatile so far in his career; last year he played two games at guard, two at center and three at tackle. This year, he should settle in at guard, and if he grades out near 80 percent, which he did most of last season, he should continue to get the respect around the league that he did last year.

Schedule This is a sore subject with Auburn these days, considering the controversy that surrounded the fact that the Tigers dropped their opener against Florida State, which was none too pleased that it lost an ESPN game, and picked up Appalachian State. Added to Idaho and Central Florida, it gives the Tigers one of the worst nonconference schedules in the league this year.

The SEC slate, however, is a lot more challenging. Auburn must travel to LSU, Tennessee, Arkansas and Georgia and has Mississippi State, Florida and Alabama at home. One must not forget about the Sept. 25 home game against Ole Miss, which is likely to be emotional for Tuberville. If the Tigers can come through this season with a winning record, Tuberville ought to be a serious candidate for Coach of the Year.



TODD WASHURN/ALLSPORT

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7

INSIDE THE SEC

TEAM ON THE RISE: Alabama. It's been strange the last couple of years for the Crimson Tide not to be at or near the top of the Western Division standings, but that's the price Alabama had to pay for NCAA violations. However, the last couple of recruiting classes have been more up to Tide standards, and while the depth is still not where coach Mike DuBose would want it and there is a huge quarterback controversy brewing, Alabama has the chance to challenge for the West title.

TEAM ON THE FALL: Mississippi State. The Bulldogs won their first-ever West title last year, but slipped into first place because LSU self-destructed and Arkansas was still trying to get over the loss to Tennessee. State still has some talent, but the loss of All-SEC tailback James Johnson (now a Miami Dolphin) and a still-developing quarterback in Wayne Madkin is going to make it difficult for the Bullies to finish higher than fourth in the West.

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Tee Martin, quarterback, Tennessee. His statistics are not going to set any new records and he isn't nearly as much of a running threat as some might lead you to believe. But Tennessee quarterback Tee Martin is a winner of the first order. You don't lead a team to 13 victories, an SEC title and a national championship without having an abundance of intangible qualities. There might be quarterbacks with better numbers in the league this season, but it's a safe bet there won't be one with more wins.

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Leonardo Carson, Auburn. Defensive ends are supposed to be pass rushers. Offensive line disruptors. Run stoppers. They aren't supposed to lead teams in tackles. But, then, most defensive ends aren't Leonardo Carson. The senior from Mobile, Alabama is big (6-3, 282), fast (a 40 time that would rival some tailbacks) and constantly hungry (you don't register 90 tackles without being tenacious). Oh, and besides making the plays he shouldn't make, he makes the ones he should. He had eight tackles for loss and eight-and-a-half sacks last year.

MUST-SEE GAMES: 1) Tennessee at Florida, Sept. 18. Tennessee finally ended its losing streak to the Gators with an overtime win a year ago. Can they finally conquer The Swamp? **2) Arkansas at Alabama, Sept. 25.** Alabama hasn't beaten the Razorbacks at home since 1993. Can Alabama take control of the West, or will the Hogs turn the Tide yet again? **3) Notre Dame at Tennessee, Nov. 6.** The last time these two met, Tennessee's "Miracle in South Bend" was one of the greatest comebacks and dramatic finishes in the history of both teams. Will luck be on the side of the Irish this time?

MOST UNDERRATED PLAYER: Anthony Lucas, Arkansas. It's true that he had Florida's Travis McGriff and Kentucky's Craig Yeast in front of him a year ago, but it's still something of a surprise that Lucas didn't get more consideration for first-team SEC a year ago. He caught 43 passes for a school-record 1,004 yards and 10 touchdowns in what was a pretty balanced offense. However, notoriety shouldn't be a problem this year, though, what with Arkansas quarterback Clint Stoerner returning to throw him passes and a dearth of quality receivers in the SEC.

NEXT STOP, NFL: 1) Shaun Alexander, Alabama. He almost came out for this April's draft, but a plethora of first-round running backs such as Ricky Williams persuaded him to stick it out for one more year. But mark this down—if he stays healthy, he will be a first-rounder this year. **2) Jamal Lewis, Tennessee.** This one is a no-brainer. Lewis has all but said throughout his Tennessee career that it was unlikely he would be in Knoxville for his senior season. If he can come back completely from the knee injury that knocked him out of

most of last season, his departure is all but sealed. **3) Leonardo Carson, Auburn.** Scouts love his desire and work ethic, and the fact that he is all over the field. Though he has good size, look for him to move to outside linebacker rather than defensive end when he gets to the pros.

JOHNNY ON THE SPOT: Dusty Bonner, quarterback, Kentucky. He was just the single-season passing yardage leader in SEC history. The No. 1 pick in the NFL draft. The state's favorite son for staying at home and helping revive the football fortunes of the state university. That would be a difficult legacy for John Elway to compete with, much less a sophomore from Valdosta, Ga. But Dusty Bonner is giving it all he has got. Wildcats coach Hal Mumme went into spring practice not expecting to name a starting quarterback until fall practice, but Bonner wrapped up the job by the second scrimmage. If he can just come close to Couch's numbers this season, the transition from the first era of Mummeball to the second will be a smooth one.

RECRUITING WINNERS AND LOSERS: Alabama didn't exactly have bad recruiting classes when it was on probation. It's just that the limitations kept the Tide from signing the kind of numbers it needed to. That wasn't a problem this year, though, as Alabama raked in a huge class with all kinds of talent. Defensive end David Payne of Memphis will push for playing time right away, while teammates Derrick Woods, a top-rated wide receiver, could help right away as well. In all, the Tide got the signatures of four Parade All-Americans, an impressive haul for a team that has won just 11 games the last two years. As impressive as Alabama's class was, that's how undistinguished Vanderbilt's was. The Commodores, because of the strict academic requirements of the school, always have trouble getting top talent to come their way, but this group is even more mundane than most. Coach Woody Widenhofer said when he took the job that he intended to go after the top talent, but so far he hasn't been able to get it to come anywhere near Nashville.

ODDS AND ENDS: Is there any reason to doubt that college football is more popular in the South than any other part of the nation? For the 18th straight year, the SEC recorded the largest total attendance figure of any conference in the nation. In 1998, over 5 million fans passed through the turnstiles and stadiums in the SEC were filled to an average of 99.64 percent capacity. With those kind of attendance numbers, it's no surprise that several league teams are expanding their stadiums. Kentucky has increased Commonwealth Stadium by 10,000 seats this season, while LSU, Arkansas and Tennessee have approved increases that will be completed soon. For the fourth straight year, CBS will be the national television network for the SEC and will carry a minimum of 12 games. The new contract runs through the 2008-2009 season. If enough teams qualify, the SEC will send at least seven teams to bowl games in 1999. The SEC champion will be a part of the Bowl Championship Series (comprised of the Rose, Orange, Sugar and Fiesta Bowls), while the rest of the SEC's bowl package will be comprised of the Florida Citrus, Cotton, Outback, Peach, Independence and Music City Bowls. The SEC has posted the best non-conference record of any league in the 1990s. The conference is 273-92-5 in non-league games this decade, a .744 winning percentage. Auburn's Sept. 4 opener against Appalachian State has more interest than most such games. The Tigers were supposed to play Florida State in what would have been the first-ever meeting between Seminole coach Bobby Bowden and one of his sons. But when Terry Bowden resigned as Auburn's coach midway through last season, Auburn's appetite for playing the game soured. The Tigers exercised the buyout clause, much to the consternation of Florida State, the ACC and ESPN, which was set to television the Tigers-Seminole matchup.

SEC PROFILE

Auburn Coach Tommy Tuberville

There was a time in the Southeastern Conference when a coach wouldn't dream of leaving one school within the league for another.

It just didn't happen, especially at the head coaching level. You take a job at a school, you work as long as you are wanted, and if, for some reason, you get the opportunity to go to another university at the Division-I level, you make sure it's one that's west of the Mississippi and north of the Mason-Dixon Line.

Doug Dickey is the perfect example of what a coach could expect in the SEC if he spurned one school for another. He left Tennessee for Florida after the 1969 season, and to this day still has his detractors for it, even though he has been back in Knoxville as the Volunteers' athletic director for more than a decade.

The old rules are changing a bit, though. Bill Oliver left Alabama as defensive coordinator and went to Auburn. Gerry DiNardo ditched Vanderbilt to become head coach at LSU. And now Tommy Tuberville leaves Ole Miss to take over Auburn.

This is not the first time Tuberville considered such a move. After the 1997 season, he all but accepted an offer to follow Danny Ford at Arkansas, but backed out at the last minute to remain with the Rebels.

Now that he is on the Plains, he is glad he did.

"We've been involved in some good programs along the way, but we plan on Auburn being the last stop," he has said. "Auburn is the place to raise our boys and fulfill our dreams. We plan on this being our last stop."

Tuberville has his work cut out for him. The Tigers won the Western Division title in 1997, but stumbled to a 3-8 record a year ago. While the talent on defense is as good as any in the conference, the offense will struggle for at least a year.

But Auburn athletic director David Housel believes that Tuberville, who compiled a 25-20 record in Oxford and kept Ole Miss from sinking under the weight of NCAA probation, can be even more successful with the Tigers.

"Tommy is one of the most sought-after young coaches in America," Housel said. "At a time when most expected the Ole Miss program to be down due to scholarship sanctions, he not only kept the program competitive, he won. We are extremely happy he (has come) here to build on our tradition and establish Auburn as a football power into the next century."

Mountain West

BY BOB CUNNINGHAM

CONFERENCE

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Kevin Feterik ^(a)	Brigham Young	6-0	190	Sr.
RB	Mike Anderson	Utah	6-2	220	Sr.
RB	Jonas Lewis	San Diego State	5-9	215	Sr.
WR	Damon Gourdine	San Diego State	5-7	160	Sr.
WR	Wendell Montgomery	Wyoming	6-2	205	Sr.
TE	Carlos Nuno	Brigham Young	6-4	250	Sr.
OT	Josh Brown	New Mexico	6-4	285	Sr.
OG	Mike Malano	San Diego State	6-2	300	Sr.
C	Blane Saipaia	Colorado State	6-3	300	Sr.
OG	Sam White	Utah	6-3	280	Jr.
OT	James Norman	Air Force	6-3	255	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DL	Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila	San Diego State	6-4	235	Sr.
DL	John Frank	Utah	6-5	270	Sr.
DL	Clark Haggans	Colorado State	6-4	235	Sr.
DL	Byron Frisch	Brigham Young	6-5	270	Sr.
LB	Rob Morris	Brigham Young	6-2	250	Sr.
LB	James Sunia	UNLV	5-10	240	So.
LB	Craig Thorstenson	Air Force	6-2	245	Sr.
DB	Brian Gray	Brigham Young	6-2	205	Sr.
DB	Brian Urlacher ^(d)	New Mexico	6-4	235	Sr.
DB	Rico Curtis	San Diego State	6-0	210	Jr.
DB	Al Rich	Wyoming	5-11	195	Jr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Owen Pochman	Brigham Young	6-0	160	Jr.
P	Deone Horinek	Colorado State	6-3	240	Sr.
KR	Damon Gourdine	San Diego State	5-7	160	Sr.

^(a) Offensive Player of the Year ^(d) Defensive Player of the Year

PROJECTED FINISH

EASTERN DIVISION	CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1. Brigham Young	6-1	8-3
2. Air Force	5-2	8-3
3. Wyoming	4-3	7-4
3. Utah	4-3	7-4
5. Colorado State	4-3	6-5
6. San Diego State	3-4	5-6
7. New Mexico	2-5	4-7
8. UNLV	0-7	1-10

KEVIN FETERIK



TODD WARSHAW/ALLSPORT

BRIGHAM YOUNG

COUGARS

For so long, BYU football has been associated with aerial prowess. Passing games that could post the loftiest of numbers. Jim McMahon, Marc Wilson, Steve Young, Ty Detmer... the list of blue-chip quarterbacks that have come through coach LaVell Edwards' program seems endless.

In recent years, however, the Cougars have found success the old fashioned way-through defense and (dare we say) running the football.

"You play the brand of football that best suits your team's talents and strengths," Edwards says.

BYU is coming off another successful season, one during which it was co-Western Athletic Conference champion and earned a trip to the Liberty Bowl, where the Cougars fell to unbeaten Tulane, 41-27. The 1999 version of BYU blue is expected to compare well to previous teams. That means the Cougars will again battle for the conference crown—although beginning this season it's the Mountain West title that is at stake—and attempt to place itself in line for a major bowl berth.

To help keep their success going, the Cougars have welcomed back an old friend, the shotgun formation. After being soundly beaten by Tulane's version of the shotgun attack in the Liberty Bowl, Edwards invited Rich Rodriguez, Tulane's former offensive coordinator (now an assistant at Clemson), to Provo this offseason to give the BYU staff a tutorial. BYU ran a lot of shotgun this spring and plans to use the formation this fall. In senior Kevin Feterik, Edwards has a veteran quarterback he can count on to come up with the occasional big play. What Feterik probably won't do is throw for 400 yards in a game, or for more than two or three touchdowns. He will be reliable and tough.

Defensively, BYU is again expected to rank among the conference's top teams, led by All-American and Butkus Award candidate Rob Morris at linebacker.

The Cougars are a team that doesn't appear to have any major weaknesses, nor are they expected to dominate in a particular area. They're just a very solid team which will likely win at least eight games and find itself playing past Christmas, as usual.

Offense Feterik's numbers were outstanding last season in the efficiency department—more than 60 percent of his pass attempts completed and only six interceptions, compared to 16 touchdowns. He's a senior entering his third year as the starter, so he's likely seen it all by now. He is the best returning signalcaller in the Mountain West.

His favorite target is Margin Hooks, a great name for a receiver... and a receiver with pretty good game. He hauled in nearly four passes per game last season and combines long-ball speed with middle-of-the-field toughness. Junior Ben Horton is another fleet-footed target who will be asked to make more big plays in '99. Jonathan Pittman was impressive this spring and should be BYU's third wideout when they go to the shotgun.

BYU's rushing game would be better off if Ronney Jenkins hadn't been benched for the Tulane game for disciplinary reasons. He subsequently transferred to Northern Arizona, taking with him more than 1,400 rushing yards, 13 touchdowns and a solid 5.2 yards per carry average. Jenkins' production will be replaced by committee with sophomore tailback Junior Mahe (425 yards rushing) and junior fullback T.J. Sitake (435 yards, 6 TDs) getting the starting nods. Edwards has more options than a diner menu, though. Five-foot-6 waterbug Jaron Dabney, the 1997 WAC Mountain Division Freshman of the Year, returns to BYU this fall after sit-

ting out last season. If Edwards wants additional power runners, he can turn to highly-touted freshmen Luke Stanley (6-1, 214) and Fahu Tahī (6-0, 223).

The offensive line lost mammoth John Tait (6-7, 315) to the Kansas City Chiefs, but returns the other four starters, including junior center Jimmy Richards and senior tight end Carlos Nuno. Tait, the first offensive lineman drafted this spring (No.14 pick overall), is a huge loss, but this is still a well-rounded group.

Defense Morris is often a man among boys in the middle of the BYU defense. He amassed 137 tackles in '98, including a remarkable 103 of the solo variety. He's the classic lead-by-example guy, but he's going to need help. However, the remainder of the BYU line-backing corps will be new to the lineup, a source of concern out of the gate.

The Cougars are also young up front, the only returning starter being stalwart defensive end Byron Frisch. It's clear that BYU will be vulnerable to the run, a major contrast to last year's squad which was tops in the WAC in run defense by allowing barely more than 90 yards a game. It's lucky for them that only a few of their conference rivals are considered threats with their rushing attacks.

The secondary will be in great shape, if 1998 starters Brian Gray (missed some spring practices to get his academic house in order) and Heshimu Robertson (suspended this spring for violations of the school's Honor Code) can make it back into Edwards' good graces. Their return would give Edwards three experienced hands in the secondary—the other being senior corner Rob Warcup—which is a must in this pass-happy conference.

Special Teams Another transfer hit the Cougars hard. Mike Ridell, who as a freshman paced the WAC in kickoff return average, bolted for Montana, leaving the kick-return chores up in the air and almost surely in the hands of another youngster. Senior punter Jesse Soward will finally be the main man after three years as the backup, and teammates rave about his leg strength. Returning placekicker Owen Pochman has a steady left foot and has increased his range on field goals significantly.

New Ones to Know While sophomore tailback Junior Mahe is the heir apparent to Jenkins in the backfield, there are two ballhooved newcomers who can also tote the football. Freshman fullback Luke Staley, the 1998 Oregon prep Player of the Year, was recruited by UCLA, Nebraska, Washington and Oregon. Fahu Tahī is another promising newcomer, who like Staley, will see time as soon as he learns the offense. Tahī racked up 5,700 career yards in high school and is Mahe's cousin. One more new face to keep an eye is York Frierson, a defensive back from Los Angeles Southwest Junior College (the same school that produced former Cougar cornerback Tim McTyer).

Schedule The Cougars open with three consecutive home games, a luxury although all three opponents—Washington, Colorado State and Virginia—are formidable. The Cougars also get Air Force and Utah at home, which means their only truly demanding road test comes in the second-to-last game of the season at Wyoming, a contest that certainly could determine the conference champ.

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-3

LOCATION: Provo, UT
ENROLLMENT: 28,300
STADIUM: Cougar Stadium (65,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 9-5
COACH: LaVell Edwards
CAREER: 243-91-3; **HERE:** 243-91-3
BOWL: Lost Liberty (41-27 to Tulane)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 46

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Kevin Feterik*	6-0	190	Sr.
HB	Junior Mahe	5-11	180	So.
FB	T.J. Sitake*	6-1	240	Jr.
WR	Margin Hooks*	5-11	190	Jr.
WR	Ben Horton*	5-11	175	Jr.
TE	Carlos Nuno*	6-4	250	Sr.
LT	Craig Schmitt	6-4	295	Sr.
LG	John Skiba*	6-3	275	Sr.
C	Jimmy Richards*	6-4	295	Jr.
RG	Matt Johnson*	6-4	310	Sr.
RT	Shane Magalei	6-3	290	Jr.
K	Owen Pochman*	6-0	160	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Hans Olsen	6-5	285	Jr.
DT	Andrew Nash	6-4	290	Sr.
DT	Chris Hoke	6-3	290	Jr.
DE	Byron Frisch*	6-5	270	Sr.
LB	Josh Lowe	6-4	245	Jr.
LB	Rob Morris*	6-2	250	Sr.
LB	Jacob Hatch	6-2	230	Jr.
CB	Brian Gray*	6-2	210	Sr.
CB	Rob Warcup*	5-9	160	Sr.
S	Tyler Nelson	6-3	210	Sr.
S	Doug Henstrom	6-1	185	Sr.
P	Jesse Sowards	5-10	185	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
T.J. Sitake	435	4.1	6

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Kevin Feterik	2,718	60.1	16	6

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Margin Hooks	49	732	14.9	3
Ben Horton	23	296	12.9	2

KICKING	
Owen Pochman, 20 for 27 FGs, 47 long, 34 of 35 PATs	

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Rob Morris	137	103 solo, 21 TFL
Byron Frisch	72	16 for losses

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 9	Washington	L, 10-20
Sept. 16	Colorado State	—
Sept. 25	Virginia	—
Oct. 1	at Utah State	—
Oct. 9	California	—
Oct. 16	at New Mexico	W, 46-21
Oct. 23	at UNLV	W, 38-14
Oct. 30	Air Force	L, 13-20
Nov. 6	at San Diego State	W, 13-0
Nov. 13	at Wyoming	—
Nov. 27	Utah	W, 26-24

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	4th
Scoring Offense	3rd
Total Defense	1st
Scoring Defense	2nd

Mountain West Conference

LOCATION: Colorado Springs, CO
ENROLLMENT: 4,100
STADIUM: Falcon Stadium (52,480)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 12-1
COACH: Fisher DeBerry
CAREER: 120-64-1; **HERE:** 120-64-1
BOWL: Won Oahu (45-25 over Washington)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 54

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Cale Bonds	6-0	155	Sr.
HB	Scott McKay	5-8	175	Jr.
HB	Qualario Brown*	5-11	185	Jr.
FB	Scott Becker	5-10	215	Jr.
WR	Matt Farmer*	6-0	195	Sr.
TE	Kenneth Chandler*	6-3	255	Sr.
LT	James Norman*	6-3	255	Sr.
LG	David Hildebrand*	6-3	295	Jr.
C	Matt Dayoc*	6-2	250	Jr.
RG	Terrance Barreau	6-3	250	So.
RT	Mike Roberts*	6-3	275	Sr.
K	Jackson Whiting	5-11	195	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DT	Shawn Thomas*	6-2	265	Sr.
NG	Buck Hodgkinson	6-1	230	Sr.
DT	Brandon Sokora	6-3	270	Sr.
OLB	Corey Nelson	6-4	215	Jr.
ILB	C.J. Zanotti*	6-1	235	Sr.
ILB	Craig Thorstenson*	6-2	240	Sr.
OLB	Travis Meldinger*	6-3	245	Sr.
CB	Tony Jones*	5-8	190	Sr.
CB	Jeff Felton	5-11	205	Sr.
SS	Nishawn Smagh	5-11	185	Sr.
FS	Jason Blevins	6-4	220	Sr.
P	Scott Gribben	6-1	185	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Qualario Brown	521	5.7	2
Cale Bonds	343	5.6	3
Chris Wade	159	11.4	1

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Cale Bonds	377	58.6	2	2

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Matt Farmer	35	650	18.6	3
Qualario Brown	16	229	14.3	4

KICKING
 Jackson Whiting, 7 for 11 FG, 44 long, 53 of 54 PAT

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Craig Thorstenson	96	team-high 3 INTs.
C.J. Zanotti	72	9 for losses
Travis Meldinger	57	4 1/2 sacks

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Villanova	—
Sept. 18	at Washington	—
Sept. 25	Wyoming	W, 10-3
Oct. 2	at San Diego State	—
Oct. 9	at Navy	W, 49-7
Oct. 16	Utah	—
Oct. 30	at Brigham Young	W, 20-13
Nov. 6	Army	W, 35-7
Nov. 13	UNLV	W, 52-10
Nov. 20	at Colorado State	W, 30-27
Nov. 27	at New Mexico	W, 56-14

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	2nd
Scoring Offense	1st
Total Defense	2nd
Scoring Defense	1st

AIR FORCE FALCONS

Coach Fisher DeBerry, entering his 16th season with the Air Force Academy, has enjoyed a lengthy and fruitful career. And 1998 was perhaps the topper.

Arguably, it was the most successful season in school history. The Falcons fell a single point shy of a perfect season, finishing 12-1 with the only defeat a 35-34 heart-breaker to TCU. They won their first outright Western Athletic Conference (WAC) title ever and put a 45-25 whipping on Washington in the Oahu Bowl.

Can last year be topped? Well, realistically that's highly unlikely. But it's clear that Air Force should be regarded as a perennial Mountain West Conference contender rather than as a one-year wonder. Of DeBerry's previous 15 squads, 10 have garnered bowl berths and three others also finished the regular season with winning records.

Over the past two seasons, the Falcons have won 22 games. Only defending national champion Tennessee (24) and Marshall (23) have won more during that two-year span. DeBerry's annual focus is goal-oriented, quite clear and perhaps a bit surprising to some.

"Our first goal will always be to beat Army and Navy," said DeBerry, referring to the annual Commander-In-Chief trophy that the Falcons earned for the 10th time during DeBerry's tenure last season. "Our second goal will be to win the conference. The third is beating Notre Dame, and the fourth is continuing to go to bowl games."

Although the Falcons probably won't be as dominant as they were a year ago, when they ranked first in the WAC in both scoring offense and defense, there appears to be enough left in the tank for another possible bowl berth run.

Offense Interestingly, the Falcons finished third in the country last year in rushing offense without placing anyone among the WAC's top 10 ballcarriers. This year, junior Qualario Brown figures to get the bulk of running workload, especially considering the program will have a newcomer at quarterback for the first time in five years. Brown rushed for more than 500 yards as a sophomore, but was sidelined this spring following toe surgery.

With all but one starter from last year returning, the Falcons' offensive line is deep and solid. The leader of this veteran group will be tackle James Norman, a 1998 first-team All-WAC selection.

The new quarterback is senior Cale Bonds, who takes over for the graduated Blane Morgan. Bonds started two games in '98, guiding the Falcons to victories in both. Against Navy, he accounted for 361 total yards (167 rushing) and four touchdowns (two rushing, two passing). Bonds' offseason progress was slowed when he suffered a broken bone on his throwing hand in the first major scrimmage last spring.

The Air Force's weakness will be at wideout, where experienced hands are few. One viable candidate to come up big is senior Matt Farmer, an all-conference pick a year ago who also might see some action as a halfback.

Defense Only Ohio State has yielded fewer points over the past two seasons than the Falcons, at less than 13 points per game. The two-headed anchor of this year's "D" figures to be defensive tackle Shawn Thomas and linebacker Craig Thorstenson. Thomas recorded eight sacks and 15 tackles for loss. Thomas' tag-team partner on the defensive line, tough-to-block tackle Bryce Fisher, will be missed, though. Fisher, the 1998 WAC Mountain Defensive Player of the Year, was drafted in the seventh round this past spring by the Buffalo Bills. Thorstenson (96 tackles in 1998) was sidelined during spring ball with a bum knee.

Thomas isn't the only big-play guy who must be replaced. Air Force's secondary lost strongside corner Tim Curry, who holds the AFA career record with nine blocked

kicks. In all, the secondary has only returning starter, senior corner Tony Jones (42 tackles, 2 INTs). There is talk that Jones, an outstanding athlete who long jumps for Air Force's track team in his spare time, might make the leap from weakside corner (his position in 1998) to strongside corner (where he would replace the all-everything Curry).

Special Teams The kicking game is in good shape, with Jackson Whiting and Scott Gribben back for their senior years as kicker and punter, respectively. Farmer handled the kick return duties last year, but DeBerry may opt for someone else because of Farmer's ever-increasing role in the offense. If that's the case, look for fleet-footed reserve halfback Chris Wade to get the nod.

New One to Know Bonds... Cale Bonds. OK, you've heard the jokes. He'll get stirred, but not shaken, yada yada. In reality, this is a good looking young quarterback who is the obvious key to the program's continued surge toward the country's elite. He has gigantic shoes to fill because his predecessor, Blane Morgan, was the winningest quarterback in AFA history (20-3). Bonds got in eight quality practices this spring before breaking the fourth metacarpal bone on his right hand. Bonds will need to be 100% by the fall because Air Force's deceptively complex wishbone attack depends heavily on the quarterback.

Schedule After a gimme at home against Division I-AA Villanova, the Falcons travel to Washington before opening conference play against potent Wyoming. The toughest road tests will come at BYU the day before Halloween and at Colorado State and New Mexico to close out the regular season.



CRAIG THORSTENSON

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-3

UTAH

UTES

Mountain West Conference

LOCATION: Salt Lake City, UT
ENROLLMENT: 25,213
STADIUM: Rice-Eccles Stadium (45,634)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 7-4
COACH: Ron McBride
CAREER: 62-43; **HERE:** 62-43
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 45

When the best football programs in the western half of the country are discussed, coach Ron McBride's University of Utah Utes aren't often mentioned.

"Utah. They play basketball there, don't they?"

A silly misconception, because while the Rick Majerus-led Utah hoops program is a Big Dance regular, the Utah football team is a winner as well. Utah is coming off a solid 7-4 season in '98, spoiled only by a nonconference upset loss to Boise State that may have ultimately cost the Utes a bowl berth. They were 5-3 in the rugged WAC, and this year's team harbors legitimate hopes of being better.

On offense, junior quarterback Darnell Arceneaux, if his shoulder is 100% sound after offseason surgery, is the main man now that Jonathan Smith has graduated. Arceneaux's playing time increased down the stretch a year ago, and he put up nearly 700 passing yards and five touchdowns in four games.

The focus of the attack, however, will be senior running back Mike Anderson, who came out of nowhere early last season to take over as the featured ballcarrier. He finished the campaign with more than 1,200 yards and a dozen touchdowns, and is clearly the top returning running back in the new Mountain West.

Unlike their hoops counterparts, Utah has never been known for its defense, but the Utes were respectable last season and should be a bit better this time around, although the lack of experience up front could be a factor. Still with a dominant back like Anderson running behind what should be a strong offensive line, the Utes should be right in the thick of things in this ultra-balanced conference. Just like they always are.

Offense Arceneaux is a perfect 6-0 as a starter in his Utes' career, including 4-0 last season. He brings a mobile aspect to the position that was missing with Smith. But Arceneaux is known for his somewhat reckless style of play that can cause turnovers... and make him susceptible to injury, such as last year when his season was ended abruptly by a shoulder dislocation, an injury so serious that it required surgery and kept him on the sidelines during spring ball. With Utah very thin at quarterback behind him, it's imperative that Arceneaux make intelligent decisions that ultimately allow him to remain on the field.

Utah lost not one, but two All-WAC receivers (Daniel Jones, Jerome Anderson) to graduation, but has as many as six different receivers who could earn playing time opposite senior slotbacks Donnie Utu and Boo Bendinger. The laundry list of possibilities include junior Chris Christensen, sophomore speedster Cliff Russell and red-shirt frosh Wayman Westbrook, along with JUCO transfers Dennis Smith, Johnny Lundy and Stevonne Smith. If the JUCO imports pan out, the Utes could be deep at wideout. If not, there could be problems. Honorable mention All-WAC tight end Andy Kassotis is also back for his senior campaign.

Mike Anderson combines good strength with deceptive quickness to make positive gains virtually every time he handles the ball. He averaged better than 106 yards per game last season (20th in the country) and is the type of runner who excels with a minimal amount of blocking. When the Utes need a tough yard to keep the sticks moving, look for Anderson to run over the right side of the Utah line, where junior guard Sam White (6-3, 280) and senior tackle Josh Cochran (6-5, 305) reside. Cochran is a big-time talent, the anchor of what should be a stellar offensive line.

Defense Utah returns three-quarters of its starting contingent in the secondary, so experience alone may be enough to rate the unit above average. Senior Teneil Ethridge is a top-notch pass defender while Andre Dyson,

a part-time starter a year ago, often comes up with the big plays. At strong safety, Kimball Christianson will switch from free safety after earning all-conference kudos at that position in '98. The lone departee was All-WAC safety Robert Love and he will be replaced by either junior Patrick Dyson or Washington State transfer Cory DeSanti.

If he's fully recovered from spring knee surgery, then 1998 first-team All-WAC rover Kautai Olevao will lead the linebacking corps, a group which also consists of experienced returners Wes Tufaga and Taulia Lave. Sיתיi Lauila (who missed spring ball with academic woes), returned missionary Brooks Bahr or JUCO transfer Matt Ward may also figure in the linebacker mix.

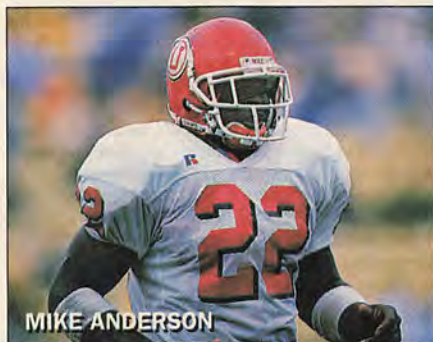
First-team All-WAC selection John Frank will man the "open" end position. Frank has the quickness to wreak havoc in opposing backfields. The other end spot will be split by Andy Bowers and Ed Johnson, both of whom emerged this spring. Juniors Ed Ta'anu (6-2, 280) and Maale Kemoeatu (6-5, 275) will clog the middle of the line.

Special Teams The strength of Utah's kicking game is punter Chris Hunter, a second team All-WAC selection in '97 and honorable mention last season. The senior owns two of the longest punts in school history, 80 and 75 yards, and is deft at putting the ball inside the 10. Ryan Kaneshiro will get a test at placekicker from Cletus Truhe. Both have been regulars in the past, but neither has asserted himself as a near-sure thing inside the 30, as McBride would prefer.

Even though Utah lost Jones off its nationally top-ranked kickoff return team of a year ago, Patrick Dyson is more than ready to be the primary returner. He averaged a whopping 33 yards on eight kickoff returns a year ago, including a touchdown.

New One to Know Russell has virtually no big-game experience but may be the Utes' fastest player. If he proves he can make receptions on the run, he'll be Utah's No. 1 longball threat. Another speed merchant to keep an eye is redshirt freshman tailback D'Shaun Crockett. Crockett gives coach McBride something that primary backs Mike Anderson and Omar Bacon don't—namely a guy out of the backfield who can stretch the defense with his speed.

Schedule The Utes have a challenging opener at Washington State before playing four games in which they will be favored in each. Included in that run is a rematch with Boise State, which upset the Utes a year ago at Salt Lake City. The conference schedule is quite demanding, with road games at Air Force and Colorado State as well as the season finale at Provo against Mountain West preseason favorite Brigham Young.



MIKE ANDERSON

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Darnell Arceneaux*	6-1	185	Jr.
RB	Mike Anderson*	6-2	220	Sr.
SLOT	Donnie Utu	6-1	195	Sr.
WR	Clifford Russell	6-0	180	So.
WR	Chris Christensen	5-11	177	Jr.
TE	Andy Kassotis*	6-3	275	Sr.
LT	Doug Kafusi	6-7	300	So.
LG	Luis Park*	6-2	300	Sr.
C	Steve McKane	6-1	245	Jr.
RG	Sam White	6-3	280	Jr.
RT	Josh Cochran*	6-5	305	Sr.
K	Ryan Kaneshiro	5-6	170	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	John Frank*	6-5	270	Sr.
DT	Ed Ta'anu	6-2	280	Jr.
DT	Maale Kemoeatu	6-5	275	Jr.
DE	Andy Bowers	6-5	260	Jr.
ROV	Kautai Olevao*	6-2	240	Jr.
MLB	Taulia Lave	6-1	255	Sr.
SLB	Sheldon Deckart	6-3	240	Jr.
CB	Andre Dyson	5-10	185	Sr.
CB	Teneil Ethridge*	5-10	190	Jr.
SS	Kimball Christianson*	6-3	210	Sr.
FS	Patrick Dyson	6-0	185	Jr.
P	Chris Hunter*	6-5	230	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Mike Anderson	1,223	4.8	12
Omar Bacon	764	4.5	9

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Darnell Arceneaux	687	55.8	5	4

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Donnie Utu	34	389	11.4	3

KICKING	FG	PTS
Ryan Kaneshiro, 8 for 11 FG (long 47), 40 of 42 PAT		

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Kautai Olevao	77	3 INTs.
Kimball Christianson	65	38 unassisted

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Washington State	—
Sept. 18	Utah State	W, 20-12
Sept. 25	at UNLV	—
Oct. 2	at Boise State	L, 28-31
Oct. 9	NE Louisiana	—
Oct. 16	at Air Force	—
Oct. 23	San Diego State	L, 20-21
Oct. 30	at Colorado State	—
Nov. 6	Wyoming	L, 24-27
Nov. 13	New Mexico	W, 41-7
Nov. 27	at Brigham Young	L, 24-26

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	1st
Scoring Offense	2nd
Total Defense	6th
Scoring Defense	8th

Mountain West Conference

LOCATION: Laramie, WY
ENROLLMENT: 11,000
STADIUM: War Memorial Stadium (34,500)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 8-3
COACH: Dana Dimel
CAREER: 15-9; **HERE:** 15-9
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 46

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Jay Stoner*	6-1	200	Jr.
RB	Tim Beasley	5-11	195	Sr.
FB	Jared Jarnagin	6-1	230	Sr.
WR	Wendell Montgomery*	6-2	210	Sr.
WR	Kofi Shuck*	6-2	175	Sr.
TE	Sterling Kihei	6-3	230	Sr.
LT	Nate Selk	6-6	295	Sr.
LG	Dan Delcorio*	6-4	295	Sr.
C	Mike Irvin	6-3	275	Fr.
RG	Brian Johnson	6-3	280	So.
RT	Chris Cichosz*	6-4	285	Sr.
K	Aaron Elling*	6-1	190	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Brian Van Emmerik*	6-4	265	Sr.
NG	Jason Dreesen	6-4	265	Sr.
DT	Jeff Boyle*	6-1	295	Jr.
DE	Patrick Chukwurah*	6-2	230	Jr.
LB	Matt Klotz	6-1	205	So.
LB	Herman White	6-0	215	So.
LB	Kwabena Peprah*	5-11	220	Jr.
CB	Robbie Duncan*	5-9	185	Sr.
CB	Adrian Boston	5-9	155	Jr.
SS	Trent Gamble	5-10	185	Sr.
FS	Al Rich*	5-11	190	Jr.
P	Matt Swanson	6-2	190	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING			
	YDS	AVG	TD
Tim Beasley	365	4.2	3
PASSING			
	YDS	PCT	TD INT
Jay Stoner	2,373	57.9	11 10
RECEIVING			
	REC	YDS	AVG TD
Wendell Montgomery	57	789	13.8 0
KICKING			
Aaron Elling, 16 for 20 FG (long 54), 27 of 28 PAT			
DEFENSE			
	TKLS	MISC	
Kwabena Peprah	57	7 tackles for losses	
Brian Van Emmerik	51	4 sacks	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Tennessee	—
Sept. 11	Weber State	—
Sept. 25	at Air Force	L, 3-10
Oct. 2	Idaho	—
Oct. 9	UNLV	W, 28-25 (OT)
Oct. 16	at NE Louisiana	—
Oct. 23	Colorado State	W, 27-19
Nov. 6	at Utah	W, 27-24
Nov. 13	Brigham Young	—
Nov. 20	New Mexico	—
Nov. 27	at San Diego State	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	9th
Scoring Offense	12th
Total Defense	10th
Scoring Defense	3rd

WYOMING COWBOYS

The Cowboys are the Rodney Dangerfields of college football, unquestionably. Coach Dana Dimel's squad won nine games a year ago, finished a solid fourth in the WAC (second in the Mountain Division) and yet didn't get a single bowl invite, merely because the program is somewhat removed geographically from others. The Cowboys' following is supposedly not as enthusiastic, said bowl promoters.

Try explaining that to the Cowboys' faithful. So, while fellow WACer TCU-6-5 during the regular season and two games behind Wyoming in the standings—was busy upsetting USC in the Sun Bowl, the Cowboys were stuck at home playing with their Christmas presents.

Now that a new season is dawning, Wyoming will seek a fresh start in a fresh new Mountain West Conference. But will that bring the program more prominence?

Only if they win, of course, and repeating last season's 8-3 mark will be a chore. This Wyoming team isn't as deep as last year's, although senior quarterback Jay Stoner is certainly a year wiser. He struggled through a disappointing 1998 from a personal standpoint, yet was in the trenches to the end to help Wyoming win six of seven conference games.

Because of the presence of Stoner and super wideout Wendell Montgomery, new offensive coordinator Manny Matsakis is installing a run-and-shoot offense. The questions are on defense. Last year's opportunistic Wyoming "D" gave up fewer points than all but two WAC teams despite ranking 10th out of 16 team in total defense. It will be difficult to duplicate that ratio, especially with only five returning starters.

Moving to the new conference should bring more respect. The Mountain West is, after all, considered to be made up of the former WAC's elite. But with that comes a more demanding schedule, which means Wyoming may find itself taking a step back before being able to proceed ahead.

Offense Stoner's 58% completion percentage a year ago is very respectable, but he threw only 11 touchdown passes to go with 10 picks and didn't get a single scoring ball into the hands of his best receiver, Montgomery. Matsakis, who comes to Wyoming from Division II power Emporia (Kan.) State, is hoping to change all that by installing a wide-open, run-and-shoot attack. Making it easier for the new offensive coordinator to emphasize the passing game is the graduation of fine runner Marcus Brigham (can you imagine having that surname in this conference?), who piled nearly 1,200 rushing yards and nine touchdowns in his senior season. Brigham finished his career as Wyoming's second all-time leading rusher and signed a free-agent deal this spring with the Oakland Raiders. His replacement appears to be senior Tim Beasley, who may offer more pure speed, but not the same between-the-tackles power or instincts of his predecessor. Wyoming returns only two starters up front, but Dimel has a history of fostering sound pass-blocking offensive lines.

Montgomery leads an otherwise inexperienced receiving cast, the exception being fellow senior starter Kofi Shuck. In the run-and-shoot, Shuck figures to have plenty of ball thrown his way and will need to come up big in order to give Montgomery more room to operate. The Cowboys also need a tight end to step up after Julian Booker made such an impact a year ago. Senior Sterling Kihei is the frontrunner for that opening.

But the real key, of course, is Stoner. He was a top recruit as a freshman but has taken on more of a journeyman label as his college career concludes. He's being handed the keys of the run-and-shoot attack and is expected to have a monster junior season.

Defense The Cowboys' thing last season was turnovers. Forcing them, and turning them into easy points. Turnovers are often a product of luck, however, as much as any other more tangible factor, so Dimel would be wise not to count on so many favorable bounces in '99.

Wyoming's best defensive player is junior safety Al Rich, whose propensity for big plays is at the core of the Cowboys' bend-but-not-break success of a year ago. Among the linebackers, only middle man Kwabena Peprah is a returning starter. Watch for opposing offenses to feature multiple schemes in an effort to confuse the Wyoming defensive greenhorns.

The Cowboys are pretty set up front with three returning starters paced by junior Jeff Boyle, a second-team All-WAC defensive end a year ago.

Special Teams Aaron Elling is generally effective as the kicker, and Matt Swanson is a capable punter although this will be his first season as the No. 1 booter. Swanson has some hug shoes to fill. After all, his predecessor Aron Langley was 14th in the nation in punting average in 1998 and signed as a free agent with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers this spring.

The return game needs a boost after finishing last in the WAC kickoff return average and 13th in punt returns. Brahm's Derenoncourt and Jon Jennings are two of the leading candidates to take over a role no one asserted themselves for a year ago.

New One to Know Beasley is relatively unknown, but he's been with the system long enough to know his way around the backfield. Anything approaching Brigham's output of '98 would be welcomed with open arms, but it won't be easy with such an inexperienced offensive front and a greater emphasis on the passing game.

Schedule The Cowboys' green defense will get quite a test right off the bat when they face the defending national champs Tennessee on Sept. 4. Phil Fulmer's bunch has quarterback Tee Martin back to run the show and future NFLer Jamal Lewis back to carry the ball after an injury-shortened 1998 campaign. After a breather against Weber State, the Cowboys head right into the Mountain West Conference fire with a game against Air Force on the final Saturday in September. Air Force, you might recall, finished last season ranked in the top 10 in both polls. Without the weaker WAC teams to fatten up on, Dimel's club will have to step up its level of play just to finish with six or seven wins.



JAY STONER

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

COLORADO STATE

RAMS

Mountain West Conference

LOCATION: Fort Collins, CO
ENROLLMENT: 23,000
STADIUM: Hughes Stadium (30,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 8-4
COACH: Sonny Lubick
CAREER: 69-42; **HERE:** 49-23
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 38

Coach Sonny Lubick's Rams may have missed their mark a year ago, but they continue to sport a quality team that will likely be in the thick of the Mountain West Conference chase in 1999.

Picked by many experts to win the Western Athletic Conference and secure a top-flight bowl bid a year ago, the Rams stumbled but still managed an 8-4 finish. Three of those losses came in the WAC as the Rams settled for third place in the WAC's Mountain Division and went bowl-less for the first time in four years.

But that was then, and this is now. Although Lubick will be forced to build an entirely new offensive backfield, talent abounds at several other positions. Defensively, the Rams will again be tough although last year's team did better at preventing yardage than it did at avoiding points. Colorado State was ninth in the 16-team WAC in points allowed.

The Rams will lean heavily on the defensive unit early on because it must replace both of last year's starting receivers (Darran Hall and Corey McCoy), one of its starting running back (Damon Washington), the team's two best o-linemen from 1998 (Anthony Cesario and Mike Newell) and last season's starting quarterback (Ryan Eslinger).

"We have a lot of newer players who will be asked to fill important jobs on our football team," explained Lubick, who has averaged seven wins per season over his seven-year term to date. Superstitious people might refer to him, based on those numbers, as "Lucky Lubick."

The only skill-position players returning are receiver Pete Webstock and fullback Kevin McDougal, neither of whom was a full-time player last season. Still, both are capable role players. McDougal, in fact, may find himself as the primary ballcarrier if his injured shoulder is 100% healed by the start of the season. That inexperience on offense puts more importance on quality play from the one area of the team deep in winning background—the defensive front.

Offense A new quarterback, a new rushing backfield, a new receiver, a couple new offensive linemen and a new tight end. Gulp. Lubick's been down this road, however. Graduated Moses Moreno, now of the NFL's Chicago Bears, was once a newcomer, right?

Junior Matt Newton will be the starting quarterback this fall. At 6-3 and 205 pounds, he's plenty big and he has a muscular arm to match. Plus, he's surprisingly mobile for his size. Still, Eslinger threw for 14 touchdowns and nearly 2,400 yards—lofty numbers for the newcomer to aspire to. To his credit, Newton was impressive when pressed into emergency duty vs. UNLV last fall, completing 18 of 28 throws for 246 yards and 3 TDs.

Making Newton's transition to full-time starter easier is the presence of McDougal, a former 1,000-yard rusher from 1997's 11-win Rams' squad who played in only seven games last season because of an assortment of injuries. If healthy, he allows the Rams ground game to continue solid going toward the point of attack. Sophomores Duan Ruff and Jason Stout will also get some carries.

That is, if there are actually holes run through. The Rams do have three returning starters on the offensive line, led by Blane Saipaia. But Cesario, a third-round draft pick of the Jacksonville Jaguars, will be sorely missed from last year's unit and his projected replacement, sophomore guard David Shohet, missed spring ball with a knee injury.

Rebstock will be joined outside by promising Dallas Davis, who may end up being the Rams' big-play threat. Davis has some big shoes to fill—those of Darran Hall, a sixth-round NFL draft choice of the Tennessee Titans last spring.

Defense There are few defensive ends any better than senior Clark Haggans, who enters his senior year with 26 career sacks, four shy of the school record. Also up front are experienced performers Casey Wolf, Mike MacKenzie, Greg Pollard and Jamie Bennett, among others. Lubick will have the luxury of liberal substitutions to keep everyone up front fresh for four quarters.

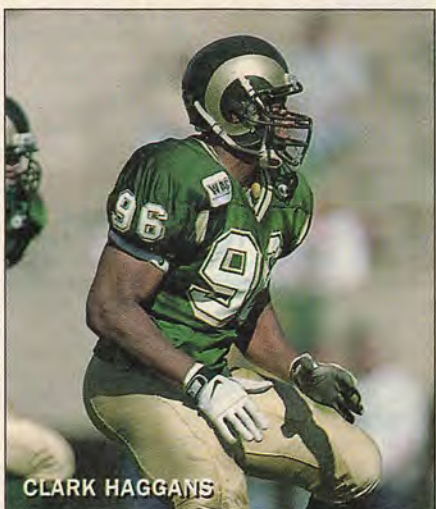
The lone returning starter at linebacker is Rick Crowell, who according to Lubick is the "best linebacker I've ever coached." Crowell collected 87 tackles last season. Ula Tuitele, a spot starter a year ago, and Tony Colacion figure to round out the starting unit.

The secondary lost two key performers, including cornerback Jason Craft (a 1999 fifth-round draft pick of the Jacksonville Jaguars), but returns two others who become the emphasis. Strong safety Erik Olson plays like a linebacker but is also quick, while Terrence Gibson is the big-play man deep. These two are potentially stellar, but may get neutralized by playing alongside two starters.

Special Teams Punter Deone Horinek, a former junior college transfer, was sixth nationally a year ago at 44.8 yards per punt. Kicker C.W. Hurst will attempt to replace graduated Derek Franz, who converted 21 straight field goals during one stretch last season. The likely choice for returning kicks is Davis, who averaged a healthy 27 yards on 12 kickoff returns while also handling three punts.

New One to Know Newton. This was supposed to be the year that heralded redshirt freshman Steve Cutlip took over at quarterback, however Newton won the starting nod fair and square. Newton's job early on will be running the offense efficiently and avoiding mistakes. Colorado State will likely attempt to play ball-control early in the campaign before opening up more as the young signalcaller gets more comfortable.

Schedule The Rams will be seeking vengeance right out of the gate as they renew their rivalry with Colorado in the season opener for both schools. The Rams were beaten by the Buffaloes, 42-14, a year ago. The Mountain West debut is at BYU Sept. 16 (televised on ESPN), and the Rams also play at Wyoming, but host Air Force among the games that figure to be more difficult.



CLARK HAGGANS

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Matt Newton	6-3	205	Jr.
FB	Kevin McDougal	6-0	205	Sr.
HB	Leon Smith	6-4	265	Sr.
WR	Pete Rebstock*	5-9	175	So.
WR	Dallas Davis	5-10	165	So.
TE	Jose Ochoa	6-3	230	So.
T	Broderick Lancaster	6-4	305	So.
G	Justin Borvansky*	6-1	280	Jr.
C	Blane Saipaia*	6-3	305	Sr.
G	David Shohet	6-6	300	So.
T	Tim Stuber*	6-5	330	Jr.
K	C.W. Hurst	5-10	165	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Mike Mackenzie	6-2	265	So.
DT	Casey Wolf*	6-4	260	Jr.
DT	Greg Pollard*	6-0	265	Sr.
DE	Clark Haggans*	6-4	235	Sr.
OLB	Tony Colacion	6-2	225	So.
MLB	Ula Tuitele	6-2	230	So.
OLB	Rick Crowell*	6-3	235	Sr.
CB	Andy Engelstad	5-10	190	Jr.
CB	Terrence Gibson*	5-11	175	Jr.
SS	Erik Olson*	6-1	215	Sr.
FS	John Howell	6-0	190	Jr.
P	Deone Horinek*	6-3	240	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Kevin McDougal	561	5.2	4
Duan Ruff	296	5.9	2

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Matt Newton	246	62.1	3	1

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Dallas Davis	39	523	13.4	5
Pete Rebstock	27	327	12.1	0

KICKING
 C.W. Hurst, 1 of 2 FG (long 20), no PATs attempted

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Rick Crowell	87	11 for losses
Clark Haggans	66	11 sacks
Terrence Gibson	52	31 unassisted

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Colorado	L, 14-42
Sept. 11	Nevada	W, 26-14
Sept. 16	at Brigham Young	—
Oct. 2	New Mexico State	W, 47-28
Oct. 9	at Fresno State	—
Oct. 16	San Diego State	—
Oct. 23	at Wyoming	L, 19-27
Oct. 30	Utah	—
Nov. 6	at New Mexico	—
Nov. 20	Air Force	L, 27-30
Nov. 27	at UNLV	W, 38-16

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	3rd
Scoring Offense	4th
Total Defense	5th
Scoring Defense	9th

Mountain West Conference

LOCATION: San Diego, CA
ENROLLMENT: 30,000
STADIUM: Qualcomm Stadium (71,400)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 7-5
COACH: Ted Tollner
CAREER: 58-46-1; **HERE:** 32-26
BOWL: Lost Las Vegas (20-13 to North Carolina)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 37

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Brian Russell*	6-2	205	Jr.
RB	Jonas Lewis*	5-9	205	Sr.
HB	Gray McNeil	6-2	250	Jr.
FL	Lonny Mitchell	6-2	205	Sr.
SE	Damon Gourdine*	5-7	160	Sr.
TE	Jim Ange*	6-4	240	Sr.
LT	Brad Elmore*	6-3	305	Sr.
LG	Andrew Kline*	6-2	295	Sr.
C	Mike Malano*	6-2	300	Sr.
RG	Ted Printy	6-4	300	Sr.
RT	Greg Spillane*	6-4	285	Sr.
K	Nate Tandberg*	5-9	180	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Scottie Nicholson*	6-3	255	Sr.
DT	Jerome Haywood*	5-9	280	So.
DT	Mark Scott	6-3	275	Sr.
DE	Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila*	6-4	240	Sr.
OLB	Martin Chlumak	6-1	240	Sr.
MLB	Joey Mayo*	6-0	240	Sr.
OLB	Michael Duran	6-2	230	Sr.
CB	Aazaar Abdul-Rahim*	5-8	175	Sr.
CB	Tairou Smith	5-7	160	Sr.
SS	Rico Curtis*	6-0	210	Sr.
FS	Jermaine Watkins	5-9	185	Sr.
P	Justin Sisco	6-1	185	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Jonas Lewis	897	5.0	7	
Larry Ned	762	5.0	4	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Brian Russell	1,438	53.5	8	7
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Damon Gourdine	55	649	11.8	4
KICKING				
Nate Tandberg, 8 for 14 FG (long 40), 24 of 26 PAT				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Rico Curtis	90	3 INTS		
Joey Mayo	86	48 unassisted		
Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila	76	7 sacks		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	South Florida	—
Sept. 11	at Illinois	—
Sept. 18	at USC	L, 33-6
Sept. 25	at Kansas	—
Oct. 2	Air Force	—
Oct. 9	New Mexico	W, 36-33
Oct. 16	at Colorado State	—
Oct. 23	at Utah	W, 21-20
Nov. 6	Brigham Young	L, 0-13
Nov. 20	at UNLV	—
Nov. 27	Wyoming	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	12th
Scoring Offense	10th
Total Defense	4th
Scoring Defense	5th

SAN DIEGO STATE

AZTECS

The San Diego State football program had a lot to be proud of last season. Picked by most publications (including this one) to finish at or near the bottom of the Western Athletic Conference because of a perceived void in terms of senior leadership, the Aztecs instead overcame an 0-3 nonconference record to win seven of eight WAC games, sharing the Pacific Division title with Brigham Young and playing in the Las Vegas Bowl.

The '98 season culminated with a 20-13 loss to North Carolina in that bowl game, however, and offered additional evidence of what some suspected all along—that the 7-5 Aztecs were merely a decent team which benefited from a watered-down schedule.

Sure, the WAC as a whole was arguably tough last season. But of its elite teams, i.e. those that finished among its upper third, the Aztecs had to face only BYU and Utah. Somehow, San Diego State avoided Air Force, Wyoming and Colorado State. Oh, and the Aztecs also averted Rice, which went 5-3 in WAC play.

SDSU lost to BYU in a shutout and nipped the Utes in overtime. The Aztecs did defeat Fresno State, another WAC team that finished with a winning conference mark, but the point is that had the Aztecs played the true meat of the conference, it's unlikely they would have finished with just a single conference defeat.

It would be easy to look at a team that went to a bowl in '98 and returns as many starters as the Aztecs do, and anoint them conference favorites, right? Sure, but as former President Bush used to proclaim eloquently yet nasally, we're "not gonna do it."

SDSU's '99 schedule includes Air Force, Wyoming and Colorado State, and retains Utah and Brigham Young as well. This time around, they'll have to truly earn their stripes.

Coach Ted Tollner has a good group to work with: An offensive line that returns virtually intact blocking for a strong, two-headed running attack. And junior quarterback Brian Russell, while maybe not the second coming of Dan Marino, finds a way to win games. The defense is decent, if not dominating.

But the Aztecs appeared to accomplish their superior '98 success with mirrors, and perhaps even a little smoke. The return to Planet Earth begins now.

Offense Senior running back Jonas Lewis, who was slowed this spring by a recurring hamstring problem, eclipsed the 1,000-yard mark as a sophomore but was held a tick under 900 last season while sharing carries with Larry Ned. The two form a lethal combination. Lewis uses his quickness to accelerate through the hole, while Ned is known for his north-south toughness. Still, the two are built similarly—on the short side, but muscular and stout—and together often wear down defenses.

The offensive line will be among the best in the Mountain West. Four of five starters return, and one, center Mike Malano, is an all-conference candidate who has made 34 straight starts. One of the other returnees, senior Brad Elmore, will move from quick guard to strong tackle. He'll be replaced at guard by senior Ted Printy, who is off academic suspension. Printy's return gives this o-line more seniors than a church bingo night.

Russell supplanted the more highly-touted Spencer Brinton last year and put up adequate throwing numbers as a sophomore. For San Diego State to improve on its 12th-rated total offense from last season's WAC rankings, it will need to throw more effectively downfield. That's why strong-armed JUCO import Jack Hawley could threaten Russell for the starting job. Leading receiver Damon Gourdine (55 receptions), a senior split

end with as much pure talent as anyone in the conference, averaged less than 12 yards per catch a year ago.

It's sort of surprising that a Tollner-coached offense would linger close to the bottom of the yardage rankings, but with the additional year of experience and that solid running attack, the unit should ascend a few notches in '99.

Defense In Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila, the Aztecs possess arguably the top defensive linemen in the conference. A first team All-WAC performer two years running, Gbaja-Biamila dominates anytime opposing offenses try to block him with a single man. When he's not making plays, it's because he's busy tying two and sometimes even three blockers. Sophomore tackle Jerome Haywood is another talented guy to keep an eye on the trenches.

SDSU's defense is well-balanced, with the big guy up front tempered by senior linebacker Joey Mayo in the middle and steady senior safety Rico Curtis in the secondary. The Aztecs return five starters on defense, but these two along with Gbaja-Biamila make up the core of the unit... and the key to its success.

The intense pressure that Gbaja-Biamila puts on opposing quarterbacks makes SDSU's solid secondary (which includes returnees in Curtis, cornerbacks Kevin Burton, Tairou Smith and Aazaar Abdul-Rahim) even better. While Mayo can hold his own with anyone in the middle, there are questions at the two outside linebacker spots. After spring ball, seniors Martin Chlumak (6-1, 240) and Michael Duran (6-2, 230) were penciled in as the starters, but that could change.

The Aztecs were statistically solid on defense a year ago, but are slated to face much deeper and more diversified offenses in '99. It will be a test.

Special Teams Gourdine will probably handle most of the kick returns, because of his instincts and game-breaking speed. He has four career touch-down returns to his credit, including two last season as he finished second in the nation in punt return average. Junior Nate Tandberg is the kicker, and his '98 numbers would be considered fair. Outside 30 yards, he was just 5 of 10 on field goal tries. That number needs to be better. The new punter will be JUCO import Justin Sisco.

New Ones to Know There are a number of possibilities here. Hawley, a JUCO import from Los Angeles Harbor, struggled some this spring but has a stronger arm than 1998 starting quarterback, Brian Russell. He should get some snaps this year, especially if Tollner is serious about calling for more deep passes. A young running back to watch for is powerfully-built redshirt freshman Garrie Simmons (6-1, 230). On defense, two redshirt freshmen should get some meaningful time on the field in 1999: safety Ricky Sharpe and defensive lineman Jared Ridder. Sisco is the new kid on special teams. He comes from the JUCO ranks with a reputation of being able to boot the ball high and deep.

Schedule The Aztecs could realistically go 3-1 outside the conference, after going 0 for 3 a year ago. The matchup at USC looks to be the only likely loss, although road trips to Illinois and Kansas could each pose problems. SDSU opens Mountain West play at home against a talented Air Force team and has road dates later on at Colorado and Utah (back-to-back) as well as UNLV.

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-6

LOCATION: Albuquerque, NM
ENROLLMENT: 23,762
STADIUM: University Stadium (31,218)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-9
COACH: Rocky Long
CAREER: 3-9; **HERE:** 3-9
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 43

NEW MEXICO

LOBOS

New Mexico entered 1998 with a potentially devastating offense and a defense with lots of questions. For '99, the defense remains mostly a mystery and the offense is unknown, too.

Graduated is quarterback Graham Leigh, who failed to follow up his brilliant junior season with a similar performance last year and that, combined with the Lobos' propensity for allowing points in bunches, added up to a bitterly disappointing 3-9 campaign.

For all intents and purposes, Long must begin again. He inherited a team that appeared formidable, but it didn't materialize. Now he has to build another on his own.

The Lobos will have an entirely new starting backfield on offense, and the majority of their defensive front and linebackers are new to the starting lineup as well. Only at wide receiver and in the defensive secondary can New Mexico consider itself set.

Regardless of how the team fares, there are certain to be numerous highlights from safety Brian Urlacher, a first-team All-American after collecting a remarkable 178 tackles to lead the WAC. He's likely to do similar deeds in the Mountain West. And this spring, the 6-2, 250-pound Urlacher was even taking some snaps as a wide receiver- a scary thought, indeed.

But the exploits of one talented tackler aren't likely to be nearly enough to carry the youthful Lobos much farther than last year's more experienced team managed. It's probably going to be a "Long" year in Albuquerque... the wrong type of long.

Offense With Leigh gone, the quarterback is likely to be junior Eric Jaworsky, who completed 65 percent of his passes in very limited duty last season. The good thing for Jaworsky is he'll have at least two capable targets to throw to in seniors Martinez Williams and Germany Thompson. The two combined for 92 receptions, more than 1,300 yards and a dozen touchdowns on the receiving end of Leigh aeriels. Two youngsters with big-play capabilities could also see time at wideout, sophomore Kirk Robbins and redshirt freshman Joe Manning.

The ground game will be turned over to senior Reginal Johnson, who's plenty capable as long as he has some blocking up front. That could happen, with three starters returning, including all-conference candidates Josh Brown and Jason Carson.

New Mexico's offense won't be as dynamic as it was the last two years, but if Jaworsky proves capable, the team should score its share of points.

Defense The problem with that last sentence is that the defense usually allowed its share plus some last season. New Mexico opponents posted better than 33 points per game in '98. No wonder the team lost nine times.

Having Urlacher around for another year before he heads to the NFL is nice, certainly, but the Lobos will need much more. Cornerbacks Marcus McDavid and Walter Bernard both return after starting a year ago, but they were the anchors of a pass defense that ranked second-to-last in the WAC.

New Mexico runs an unorthodox 3-3-5 scheme, which puts plenty of pressure on the front three. Junior Henry Stephens is the only returning starter up front, and he'll be asked to switch from end to nosetackle. Junior Mike Barnett takes over as middle linebacker after starting on the outside last season. And he'll be flanked by two more newcomers.

Inexperience on defense is a definite negative. A

negative experience, therefore, appears imminent.

Special Teams Talk about lack of depth. The '99 Lobos have a new kicker, punter and maybe even return men. Everyone's unproven, so there's not much to look at until the games begin. At kick returner, Long will probably utilize either Williams or perhaps Johnson in some capacity, unless someone surfaces over the spring or summer in drills.

The kicking battle will be waged between sophomore David McKinney and senior Jason Plum. Sophomore Jason Rubin appears to have the upper hand on punting. Oh, and last year's kicker was Jason Bloom. It appears that the name "Jason" is a prerequisite.

New One to Know New Mexico's only real chance to surprise, even if its defense plays better than expected, is for Jaworsky to take the job by the throat and get the ball into the hands of his talented receivers early, late and often. Another new face that the coaching staff would love to see step up is redshirt frosh receiver Joe Manning. Blessed with 10.5 speed in the 100 meters, Manning must only learn to give consistent effort every time out to earn playing time.

Schedule The Lobos open at Texas-El Paso, a team that upset them during homecoming a year ago. If vengeance means anything, New Mexico could actually be 4-0 heading into conference play, because they also lost to rival New Mexico State a year ago. The key stretch within the Mountain West will come in the middle, when the Lobos play three straight home games, against BYU, UNLV and Colorado State.



BRIAN URLACHER

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Eric Jaworsky	6-2	200	Jr.
TB	Reginal Johnson	5-9	175	Sr.
FB	Jarrod Baxter	6-1	220	So.
WR	Martinez Williams*	5-11	165	Sr.
WR	Germany Thompson	6-3	210	Sr.
TE	Brian Johnson	6-3	235	So.
LT	Josh Brown*	6-4	285	Sr.
LG	Jared St. Aubyn	6-4	300	So.
C	Jason Carson*	6-3	300	Sr.
RG	Chad Thacker*	6-5	280	Sr.
RT	Jon Samuelson	6-5	280	Jr.
K	David McKinney	6-0	185	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DLE	Jason Purvis*	6-5	250	Sr.
NT	Henry Stephens*	6-3	265	Jr.
DRE	Travis Journagan	6-4	250	Jr.
OLB	Jeff Macrea	6-2	260	Sr.
MLB	Mike Barnett*	6-3	220	Jr.
OLB	Casey Tisdale	6-4	245	Sr.
LCB	Walter Bernard*	6-2	195	Jr.
RCB	Marcus McDavid*	5-10	170	Sr.
NB	Derrell Moten	5-11	190	So.
SS	Scott Gerhardt	6-0	185	So.
FS	Brian Urlacher*	6-4	235	Sr.
P	Jason Rubin	6-0	190	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Reginal Johnson		285	3.7	3	
Jarrod Baxter		190	5.0	0	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Eric Jaworsky		128	65.0	1	2
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Martinez Williams		49	760	15.5	7
Germany Thompson		43	601	14.0	5
KICKING		None			
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Brian Urlacher		178	14.5 tackles per game		
Marcus McDavid		52	13 passes def.		
Mike Barnett		49	38 assisted		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at UTEP	L, 19-22
Sept. 11	New Mexico State	L, 27-28
Sept. 18	Northern Arizona	—
Sept. 25	at Boise State	—
Oct. 9	at San Diego State	L, 33-36 (OT)
Oct. 16	Brigham Young	L, 21-46
Oct. 30	UNLV	—
Nov. 6	Colorado State	—
Nov. 13	at Utah	L, 7-41
Nov. 20	at Wyoming	—
Nov. 27	Air Force	L, 14-56

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	7th
Scoring Offense	7th
Total Defense	12th
Scoring Defense	14th

Mountain West Conference

LOCATION: Las Vegas, NV
ENROLLMENT: 21,000
STADIUM: Sam Boyd Stadium (40,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 0-11
COACH: John Robinson
CAREER: 104-35-4; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 36

UNLV

REBELS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
QB	Jason Vaughan	6-4	205	Jr.	
RB	Jeremi Rudolph	5-10	170	Jr.	
RB	James Wofford*	6-0	200	Jr.	
WR	Len Ware*	6-1	185	Sr.	
WR	Nate Turner	6-2	210	Jr.	
HB	Jermaine Curtis	6-3	230	Jr.	
LT	John Greer*	6-5	290	Jr.	
LG	Brian Hart	6-5	290	Jr.	
C	Danny Pacheco	6-2	290	Jr.	
RG	Tony Terrell	6-5	315	Fr.	
RT	Robert Grundy*	6-5	315	Sr.	
K	Tim O'Reilly*	6-0	205	Sr.	

DEFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
DE	Bret Gilbert	6-2	230	Sr.	
NG	Ahmad Miller	6-4	280	So.	
DT	Roderick Jones*	6-2	245	Sr.	
DE	Ahmad Briggs	6-3	235	Fr.	
OLB	Tyler Brickell	6-4	230	Jr.	
MLB	James Sunia*	5-10	240	So.	
OLB	Jerrad Pierucci*	6-2	225	Sr.	
CB	Kevin Thomas*	5-11	175	So.	
CB	Andre Hilliard	5-8	155	Sr.	
FS	Sam Brandon	6-3	180	So.	
SS	Randy Black*	6-0	205	Jr.	
P	Ryan McDonald	5-11	170	Fr.	

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
James Wofford		816	4.7	5
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD
Chris Hayward		300	62.2	1
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG
Len Ware		39	500	12.8
KICKING		TD		
Tim O'Reilly, 5 for 9 FG (long 38), 13 of 17 PAT				
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC	
James Sunia		115	led team	
Kevin Thomas		61	0 ints.	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 2	at North Texas	—
Sept. 11	at Baylor	—
Sept. 18	Iowa State	—
Sept. 25	Utah	—
Oct. 2	at Nevada	L, 20-31
Oct. 9	at Wyoming	L, 25-28 (OT)
Oct. 23	Brigham Young	L, 14-38
Oct. 30	at New Mexico	—
Nov. 13	at Air Force	L, 10-52
Nov. 20	San Diego State	—
Nov. 27	Colorado State	L, 16-38

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	16th
Scoring Offense	15th
Total Defense	14th
Scoring Defense	16th

If ever a program coming off a winless season could have reason for optimism, it's UNLV going into 1999.

The Rebels, coming off a brutal 0-11 run, welcomed one of college football's most recognizable head coaches into the fold during the offseason, bringing aboard John Robinson in an attempt to resurrect a downtrodden program at a school that is obviously much more well-known for its basketball exploits.

Robinson's has been masterful up until now, having won nearly 75 percent of his games at USC during two stints lasting a dozen years. He's won Rose Bowls, shared a national title in 1978, and even spent a successful run as an NFL head coach in the mid-to-late 1980s with the Los Angeles Rams.

He's accustomed to gearing up to beat UCLA and Notre Dame on national TV, so we assume that he can probably handle preparing for Nevada-Reno.

Robinson may be just the tonic for a program seeking true legitimacy as a Division I program. But is UNLV's current state a good tonic for a 60-something head coach who's already long proven his worth? We'll have to wait a while to find out. The Rebels are going to be very young... so young, in fact, that another 0-11 season isn't out of the question. It's reasonable for Robinson to need time to establish his mark on the program, to give himself a chance at coaching the players for a couple years that he recruited this past winter.

Already, Robinson has been a positive for the program, helping the Rebels gain the nod for the best recruiting class in the Mountain West, according to one major publication.

The 1999 season, in all reality, is probably going to be a long one in Vegas, with victories likely to be few and far between. But give Robinson a couple of years, and watch what transpires.

Offense Robinson has gone the quick-fix route to repair what ailed this toothless offense (last in WAC in total offense, second-to-last in WAC in scoring offense in 1998). When Robinson arrived, sophomore Chris Hayward, who started two games in '98, was the only returning quarterback. So Robinson went shopping and found former Ole Miss quarterback Jason Vaughan. He'll start under center with Hayward serving as the primary backup.

Lining up behind Vaughan will be JUCO import Jeremi Rudolph, who started off his career at Florida State. The speedy Rudolph looked impressive in the spring game, toting the ball 11 times for 85 yards and two scores. The Rebels do return an experienced fullback in junior James Wofford, who managed more than 800 yards in 1998. He'll probably carry a lot less and block a whole lot more under Robinson, who loves the toss sweep. Backing up the smallish Rudolph (5-10, 170) at tailback will be seniors Dahrin Footman and Coury Hankins. Hankins is currently the No. 2 man, but Footman was great in the spring game (five carries, 87 yards).

Vaughan, Robinson's new QB, will have some guys to play catch with, thanks to the return of Len Ware (39 catches, 500 yards, 2 TDs) and the presence of JUCO imports Nate Turner and Jermaine Curtis. Turner, who transferred to UNLV from Compton (Calif.) College, has NFL size (6-2, 210) and swift feet. Curtis will play sort of a Shannon Sharpe H-back role

rather than that of a true tight end. When Robinson wants to run rather than pass, converted 260-pound guard Peter Tramonatanas will enter the fray at tight end.

Other than bookend tackles John Greer and Robert Grundy, the Rebels offensive front will be all-new. One guy to keep an eye peeled for is Tony Terrell, a 295-pound redshirt freshman who will start right away and should blossom into a great one in time.

Defense The Rebels will battle inexperience on this side of the ball as well, especially up front. Of the 10 players listed as defensive linemen on the spring roster, only senior Roderick Jones has any starting experience, having lined up for the opening play six times in '98. Over the long haul, Robinson is planning to build his defensive line around a pair of youngsters, 6-3 redshirt freshman rush end Ahmad Briggs and 6-4, 280-pound sophomore nose guard Ahmad Miller. Both Ahmads will start their on-field education right away, as both are listed as projected 1999 starters. Well-decorated newcomer Kawika Sagapolu (6-3, 280) could be another long-term building block on the defensive line, if he's half as good as his advance billing.

UNLV does return a pair of decent linebackers, senior Jerrad Pierucci and sophomore James Sunia, who paced the Rebels in all the primary tackling categories a year ago.

The secondary has sophomore corner Kevin Thomas as a returning starter, and some part-timers from last season such as senior Andre Hilliard and junior Randy Black. These guys better mature quickly.

Special Teams Senior Tim O'Reilly figures to return as the kicker, although his numbers (5 of 8 field goals, 13 of 17 PATs) were unimpressive. Freshman Ryan McDonald will do the punting.

New Ones to Know Football game-day program sales figure to reach an all-time high this season as Rebel fans try to learn the names and numbers of their completely-revamped lineup. On offense, there are a boatload of guys to watch out for—especially quarterback Jason Vaughan and tailback Jeremi Rudolph. Think for a second about where these guys started off their college careers: Vaughan in the SEC (at Mississippi) and Rudolph at perennial national power Florida State. Schools of that ilk don't throw away scholarships, so both figure to be real talents who will make an instant impact, as do new wideout Nate Turner, new H-back Jermaine Curtis and freshman offensive guard Tony Terrell. On defense, make sure to monitor the progress of the two new Ahmads on the defensive line (sophomore nose guard Ahmad Miller and freshman pass rusher Ahmad Briggs).

Schedule The Rebels open with two away games, the opener a Thursday night contest at North Texas. Robinson won't make his home sideline debut until Sept. 18 against Iowa State. After hosting Utah the following week, the Rebels won't play at home again until Oct. 23, the homecoming game with BYU. In between are two road games and an open week.

PROJECTED RECORD: 1-10

INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN WEST

TEAM ON THE RISE: UNLV. Stop laughing. We mean it. Stop it. The Runnin' Rebels had become a running joke in college football, but proven winner John Robinson will turn things around quickly. He has already landed a former Florida State recruit to start at tailback (Jeremi Rudolph) and a former SEC recruit to start at quarterback (Jason Vaughan). And then he hit some old haunts (the California JUCO ranks) to get a couple of receivers for Vaughan to play catch with. Old JR could win three or four games this season and could really start making some noise in the early part of 21st century.

TEAM ON THE FALL: Colorado State. The decline actually started last season, when quarterback Moses Moreno graduated. Coach Sonny Lubick's team has had a great run, but this year will be down a little and next year possibly a bit more.

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Kevin Feterik, QB, BYU. The most complete quarterback in the conference gets a new toy to play with (the newly-installed shotgun formation), and QBs gain this honor more often than not. A close second to Utah running back Mike Anderson.

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Brian Erlacher, DB, New Mexico. The guy had 178 tackles as a junior... and he's a safety, for cryin' out loud. Impressive. Most impressive. BYU's hitting machine of a middle linebacker Rob Morris also deserves a mention here.

MUST-SEE GAMES: 1) Air Force at BYU, Oct. 30. The conference's top two teams square off. Too bad it's not in the season finale. **2) Air Force at Colorado State, Nov. 20.** Looking more and more like a legitimate intra-state rivalry. **3) Utah at BYU,**

Nov. 27. Don't be surprised if Utah still has something to gain beyond pride.

MOST UNDERRATED PLAYER: Damon Gourdine, WR, San Diego State. Nobody outside the conference talks about this guy, but he's so fast it's scary. He's in line for a huge season in '99.

NEXT STOP NFL: 1) Mike Anderson, RB, Utah. Big, strong, fast and good instincts. What else is there? **2) Deone Horinek, P, Colorado State.** Coming in at the right time. There seems to be a void for quality punters in the NFL, and he's among the nation's best in college.

JOHNNY ON THE SPOT: Jay Stoner, QB, Wyoming. He's talented, but has yet to take the next step toward being truly outstanding. Maybe this will be the year with Cowboys unveiling a run-and-shoot attack.

RECRUITING WINNERS AND LOSERS: It's par for the course to say that BYU had the best recruiting class and, while LaVell Edwards and company did just fine, the honor goes to UNLV and John Robinson. Utah also was strong, more than holding its own within its state. Ditto for Wyoming. Colorado State and New Mexico rate a notch below, according to *Touchdown Illustrated*.

ODDS AND ENDS: There are a total 42 games pitting MWC schools against holdovers of the WAC. They're non-conference games, so they're less significant, but it will be interesting to see how dominant the MWC is... The one program in flux in the conference is New Mexico. Coach Rocky Long may find himself on the hot-seat if significant improvement isn't achieved by his Lobos, who finished 3-9 in Long's first season a year after winning nine games and going to a bowl.

MOUNTAIN WEST MINI-FEATURE

MWC is the Best of the Former WAC

The split-up of the Western Athletic Conference, resulting in two eight-team leagues rather than one of 16, came about under somewhat controversial circumstances.

But what college football fans truly care about, ultimately, is the end result. And the result was that the Mountain West got most of the cream of crop. An examination of the 1998 WAC standings reveals that six of the top eight teams switched to the Mountain West. Of the eight remaining in the WAC, only TCU finished the season with a winning overall record, and the Horned Frogs were just 4-4 in conference play.

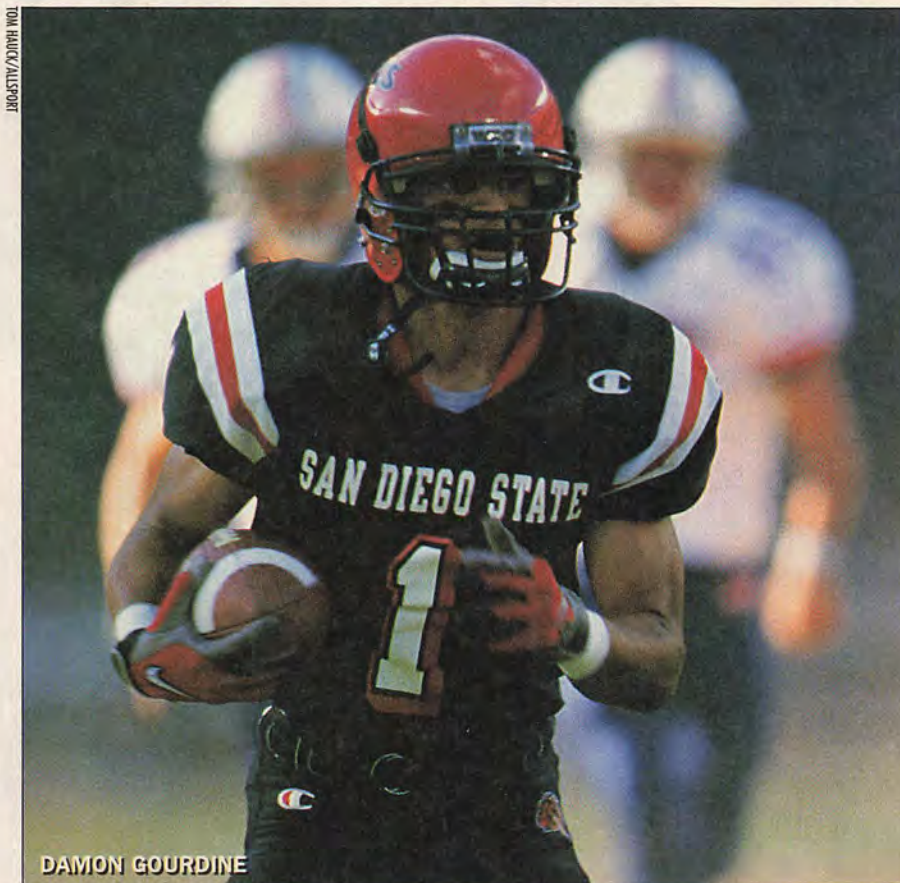
That disparity likely means that it will be the Mountain West that will get any favorable attention forwarded to the region by pollsters and computer analysis alike.

"The Mountain West is certainly the stronger of the two conferences if you go by last year's standings," one conference official said. "We hope that balance that we have will result in us being regarded as the major football conference we deserve to be."

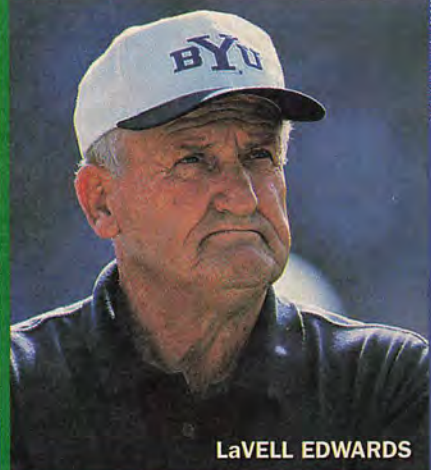
The odds of becoming a superpower don't favor the MWC, however. The former WAC has had unbeaten teams in the past, but only Brigham Young in 1984 was crowned national champion. The conference that a school plays in means everything when it comes to pursuing national recognition. For example, outside the Rocky Mountains, consider Tulane, which defeated BYU by two touchdowns in the Liberty Bowl to finish 12-0, yet failed to merit even a top 5 final ranking in either major poll, and finished out of the top 10 in the BCS rankings.

The MWC hopes to overcome such a scenario, pointing toward the comparative strength of programs such as BYU, Air Force and Colorado State as comparing "very favorably with the Conference USA," a league source said. Plus, the MWC has two college coaching legends among its ranks, BYU's LaVell Edwards and UNLV's John Robinson, which should help it garner national publicity.

Still, only an MWC team with a perfect regular season is likely to gain admittance into a BCS bowl. How fair that is will be determined by who else gets invites from the nation's more renowned conferences.



DAMON GOURDINE



LaVELL EDWARDS

Western Athletic

BY R. KEITH KELLEY

CONFERENCE

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Billy Volek	Fresno State	6-2	210	Jr.
RB	Rodnick Phillips	SMU	6-0	205	Sr.
RB	LaDanian Tomlinson	TCU	5-11	210	Jr.
RB	Deonce Whitaker	San Jose State	5-6	180	Jr.
WR	Charles Smith	Fresno State	5-9	175	So.
WR	Damon Savage	Tulsa	5-11	185	Sr.
TE	Brian Natkin	UTEP	6-4	240	Jr.
OT	Chris Fe'esago	San Jose State	6-3	325	So.
OG	Neal Gray	Rice	6-3	275	Sr.
C	Carey Clayton	UTEP	6-4	270	Jr.
OG	Michael Keathley	TCU	6-4	295	Jr.
OT	Kaulana Noa	Hawaii	6-5	315	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DL	Samson Sherrod	San Jose State	6-4	230	Sr.
DL	Brian Young	UTEP	6-4	275	Sr.
DL	Aaron Schobel	TCU	6-4	245	Jr.
LB	Matt Paul	Hawaii	6-3	245	Sr.
LB	Jason Simonton	SMU	5-11	225	Sr.
LB	Tim Skipper	Fresno State	5-7	200	Jr.
LB	Dan Dawson	Rice	6-1	180	So.
CB	Reggie Hunt	TCU	6-0	210	Sr.
CB	Tracy Hart	SMU	5-11	195	Sr.
S	Chris Miller	Tulsa	5-9	185	Jr.
S	Payton Williams	Fresno State	5-8	175	Jr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Ricky Bishop	UTEP	5-9	170	Jr.
P	Colin Vadheim	SMU	6-1	180	Jr.
KR	Deonce Whitaker	San Jose State	5-6	180	Jr.

PROJECTED FINISH

	CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1. SMU	5-2	7-4
2. Rice	4-3	6-5
3. TCU	4-3	6-5
4. Fresno State	4-3	6-6
5. Tulsa	4-3	5-6
6. San Jose State	3-4	4-7
7. UTEP	2-5	5-7
8. Hawaii	2-5	4-8

BILLY VOLEK



BRIAN BAHR/ALLSPORT

SOUTHERN METHODIST

MUSTANGS

It seems so long ago when running backs Eric Dickerson and Craig James were leading SMU to Southwest Conference titles and Cotton Bowl berths.

Actually it has been a while. About 16 years.

Since then, the Mustangs have endured the NCAA-imposed death penalty and have slowly fought their way back toward prominence. A winning season in 1997 appeared to be a major hurdle for coach Mike Cavan's program, because the 6-5 campaign coincided with Cavan's first season on the job.

The program took a step backward last season, finishing at 5-7. But the Mustangs at one point were 0-3 following a devilish nonconference slate. They went on from there to win five of their final nine, going 4-4 in conference play. And now, with the return of the Western Athletic Conference's best running back in Rodnick Phillips as well as its top linebacker, Jason Simonton, the Mustangs appear to be frontrunners in the newly restructured, eight-team WAC.

"I think our team learned about adversity last season," said Cavan. "The way last season started for us was rough, but our young team fought back to make it a respectable year."

Among the Mustangs' exploits of '98 was a triumph over archrival TCU (which went on to win the Sun Bowl) and a defeat of Navy. SMU's defense was ranked 14th nationally a year ago and is the primary reason for optimism this season, if Cavan can rebuild the forward wall. Simonton is outstanding as the conference's leading returning tackler, and senior corner Tracy Hart, a safety last year, is a standout athlete as well.

Phillips is a returning 1,000-yard rusher who allows Cavan to dictate a game the old-fashioned way: Through defense and running the ball. And it's a good thing, too, because the Mustangs will be young at quarterback with sophomore Josh McCown, although the kid did start five games as a frosh. If the defense maintains its elitist persona and the offense can grind it out with Phillips, the Mustangs are a definite threat to finally secure that long-awaited conference title and postseason bowl berth.

Offense Phillips averaged 4.7 yards a carry and had nine touchdowns in '98. He is the Mustangs' first 1,000-yard rusher since 1985. Those numbers could swell even more as he benefits from an offensive line that returns four starters, including both tackles and both guards. All four returnees upfront are jumbo-sized seniors: left tackle Jerry Chavira (6-5, 295), left guard Austin Adami (6-3, 305), right guard Bill Holder (6-7, 315) and right tackle Trey Bandy (6-5, 295).

McCown's passing numbers looked like those of, well, a freshman. Especially the completion rate of less than 47 percent. He's a mobile director considering his good size, but his arm is unquestionable in terms of strength. Despite his flaws, the job is his now after Chris Sanders (seven starts at QB in 1998) opted to transfer to Tennessee-Chattanooga in January. If McCown continues to struggle, Cavan might call on true freshman Kelan Luker from Stephenville, Texas. Luker passed for a Class 4-A state record 4,697 yards and 49 TDs last season for a 15-1 state champion.

With last year's top receiver Albert Johnson gone, whoever is under center will need big performances from the receiving tandem of Damond Blueitt and Tony Newsome in order to keep teams from putting eight guys in the box to stop the run. Of the two, Blueitt has all-league potential. If Newsome doesn't

pan, Cavan isn't without options after having recruited wide receivers this offseason, including Luker's high school teammate Cody Cardwell.

Defense Simonton is a monster, with 131 tackles in 1998 (237 over two seasons), and he's not the only force. Hart was among the team's leading tacklers and had five interceptions a year ago. This fall, the ballhawking Hart will move from safety to cornerback to help shore up that area after the graduation of two top-notch corners in all-league selection Jacoby Rhinehart and four-year letterman Donald Mitchell. Senior free safety Raymon Brown and sophomore linebacker Vic Vilorio are also standout talents.

The major defensive questions come upfront, where Luke Johnson and Alex Pahlula are the only battled-tested players. And Johnson saw his 1998 season cut short by a knee injury. The secondary area of concern is the secondary. Hart was at the, uh, heart of the effective secondary but there's less experience back there than last year. His move from strong safety to corner should be smooth, but the other corner figures to be a redshirt freshman (Kevin Garrett). And Hart's strong safety spot will be filled by a largely untested player in sophomore Tommy Dorsey, whom Cavan naturally hopes will make sweet music in his first year as a starter.

Special Teams Punter Colin Vadheim, a junior walk-on, ranked in the top 30 nationally with his 42.1 yards per boot average and is expected to be the WAC's best. Junior kicker Roy Rios made only 6 of 14 field goal tries, but he hit three of his last four after missing seven of his first 10 tries. Expect a significantly better performance in '99. The kick return duties are up for grabs.

New Ones to Know Sophomore Kevin Aldridge has a high standard to meet as the one SMU linebacker who is not a returning starter. If he meets or exceeds expectations, the Mustangs' interior defense will again be the WAC's stingiest. Three other new faces bear watching, though. With senior all-league candidate Tracy Hart on one corner, opposing teams figure to attack redshirt freshman cornerback Kevin Garrett early and often. Therefore, he figures to be a key figure in the Mustangs' 1999 fortunes.

The other two highly-touted newcomers are on offense: quarterback Kelan Luker and tailback Kris Briggs. Luker could push incumbent Josh McCown for the starting nod, if McCown continues his inconsistent throwing. Briggs is the heir apparent to Phillips at tailback and should get on the field some as a true freshman. After all, Briggs rushed for a combined 3,886 yards and 47 TDs in his final two seasons in Carthage, Texas.

Schedule The Mustangs are faced with another demanding nonconference slate. They host Arkansas in the opener. The Razorbacks handed SMU a 27-point loss last season. Then they go to Tulane, which is coming off a perfect season in '98. A trip to Big 12 foe Kansas is also scheduled. After that rough stretch of early games, the schedule is balanced with the home/away slate alternating each week beginning Oct. 9 through the end of the campaign.

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

LOCATION: Dallas, TX
ENROLLMENT: 10,038
STADIUM: Cotton Bowl (68,252)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 5-7
COACH: Mike Cavan
CAREER: 78-61-2; **HERE:** 11-12
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 36

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Josh McCown	6-3	205	So.
TB	Rodnick Phillips*	6-0	210	Sr.
FB	Jeff Pennington*	6-1	245	Sr.
WR	Damond Blueitt*	6-3	205	Sr.
WR	Tony Newsome	6-2	210	Jr.
TE	Michael Brown	6-1	250	So.
LT	Jerry Chavira*	6-5	295	Sr.
LG	Austin Adami*	6-3	305	Sr.
C	Rich Nichols	6-3	270	Jr.
RG	Bill Holder*	6-7	315	Sr.
RT	Trey Bandy*	6-5	295	Sr.
K	Roy Rios*	5-10	200	Jr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Markus Pratt	6-0	255	So.
DT	Chase Schavarda	6-2	255	Jr.
DT	Alex Pahlula*	6-0	285	Jr.
DE	Luke Johnson*	6-1	230	Sr.
OLB	Kevin Aldridge	6-1	260	So.
ILB	Jason Simonton*	5-11	225	Sr.
OLB	Vic Vilorio*	5-10	225	So.
CB	Tracy Hart*	5-11	195	Sr.
CB	Kevin Garrett	5-9	185	Fr.
SS	Tommy Dorsey	5-9	190	So.
FS	Raymon Brown*	6-2	190	Sr.
P	Colin Vadheim*	6-1	180	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Rodnick Phillips	1,115	4.7	9	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Josh McCown	619	46.5	7	8
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Damond Blueitt	37	491	13.3	3
Tony Newsome	14	174	14.5	0
KICKING				
Roy Rios, 6 of 14 FG (long 44), 23 for 25 PATs				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Jason Simonton	131	tops among WAC returners		
Tracy Hart	92	5 INTs		
Raymond Brown	84	3 fumbles forced		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Arkansas	L, 17-44
Sept. 11	at Tulane	L, 21-31
Sept. 25	Hawaii	W, 28-0
Oct. 2	at Kansas	—
Oct. 9	at UTEP	—
Oct. 16	Fresno State	—
Oct. 23	at San Jose State	—
Oct. 30	Rice	L, 17-23
Nov. 6	at TCU	W, 10-6
Nov. 13	Cal-State Northridge	—
Nov. 20	at Tulsa	W, 33-3

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

		WAC RANK
Total Offense	.....	14th
Scoring Offense	.....	14th
Total Defense	.....	3rd
Scoring Defense	.....	7th

Western Athletic Conference

LOCATION: Houston, TX
ENROLLMENT: 2,600
STADIUM: Rice Stadium (70,000)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 5-6
COACH: Ken Hatfield
CAREER: 139-90-4; **HERE:** 26-28-1
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 42

RICE

OWLS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Chad Richardson*	5-11	200	Sr.
RB	Anthony Griffin	5-10	185	Jr.
RB	Leroy Bradley	5-11	195	So.
FB	Jamie Tyler*	6-0	195	So.
SE	Gilbert Okoronkwo	6-3	180	So.
TE	Shan Jackson*	6-2	285	Sr.
LT	Rod Beavan*	6-2	285	Jr.
LG	Neal Gray*	6-3	275	Sr.
C	Matt Baldwin	6-2	275	Sr.
RG	Heath Fowler	6-3	285	So.
RT	Aaron Sandoval*	6-2	285	Jr.
K	Derek Crabtree*	6-4	210	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Nick Sabula	6-3	235	Fr.
DT	Judd Smith*	6-1	280	Sr.
NG	Larry Brown	6-2	285	So.
DE	Jake Jackson	6-3	250	Jr.
OLB	Jarrett Erwin	6-2	220	Jr.
MLB	Dan Dawson*	6-1	180	So.
OLB	Larry Ruffin	5-10	195	Sr.
DB	Karlton Bedford	5-10	190	Sr.
DB	Adrian Sadler*	5-10	180	Jr.
DB	Travis Ortega*	6-3	205	Jr.
DB	LonDee Smith*	6-2	190	Jr.
P	Victor Young*	6-1	190	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Chad Richardson	746	4.1	6	
Jamie Tyler	614	4.2	8	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Chad Richardson	598	34.7	3	4
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
None				
KICKING				
Scott Grimes, 4 of 9 FG (long 42), 14 for 17 PATs				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Dan Dawson	71	42 unassisted		
Judd Smith	58	4 sacks		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Houston	—
Sept. 11	at Michigan	—
Sept. 18	at Texas	L, 31-38
Sept. 25	Navy	—
Oct. 2	at Tulsa	W, 14-10
Oct. 9	at Hawaii	—
Oct. 16	San Jose State	L, 17-20
Oct. 23	TCU	W, 14-12
Oct. 30	at SMU	W, 23-17
Nov. 6	at Fresno State	—
Nov. 13	UTEP	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

WAC RANK	
Total Offense	13th
Scoring Offense	9th
Total Defense	11th
Scoring Defense	10th

No one outside the Rice campus talks much about it, but there are few head coaches who have done more with less over the last five years than Ken Hatfield. Once a perennial doormat of the old Southwest Conference, the Owls have been more than respectable under the former Arkansas coach. Last year, the team won five of eight Western Athletic Conference games.

And now, with the splitting of the WAC into two distinctly different halves, the Owls can enter 1999 harboring legitimate conference title hopes.

"We've built slowly, but steadily. And we've done it our own way," Hatfield said last season. "We've always wanted the respect a quality program deserves, and we're getting it."

On offense, the Owls will again feature the triple option which has made them so difficult for opposing coaches to prepare for. In senior Chad Richardson, Hatfield has an accomplished running quarterback who is well-schooled in the nuances of the triple option. Sure, Hatfield wishes Richardson was a little more accurate in his throwing (34.7 completion % in 1998), but he likes the way he runs the team. Two key components of the option attack—namely seasoned tailbacks Michael Perry and Keilone Gordon—are gone, but there are three running backs with varying degrees of experience returning.

The defense will have some question marks. Rice ranked in the bottom half of the WAC rankings a year ago. A similar result will prevent that coveted league crown.

Overall, it's a team that sports some experience, decent depth and returners at most of the key positions. It's quite possible that next year's Rice squad will be significantly better than this one. But with no more BYUs and Air Force's and Colorado State's to worry about, the Owls could cheat fate and put together a championship team this season.

Offense Richardson amassed more than 1,300 total yards a year ago including 746 rushing. His instincts running the option are reliable, and his athleticism staunch. He may be asked to throw the ball a bit more in '99, even though he completed only 34.7% of his throws last season. The Owls need a little more balance in their attack after finishing fifth in the country in rushing offense (257.2 ypg) and 111th in passing offense (60.6 ypg) a year ago.

If receivers such as Gilbert Okoronkwo and Matt Webber can produce after overcoming nagging injuries, the option will become all the more dynamic if Richardson can throw for even 100 yards per contest.

Counted on to be the primary weapons within the option are halfbacks Anthony Griffin, a junior, and sophomore Leroy Bradley. Both played only part-time last season, but both have enough exposure to make the transition successfully. Griffin, in particular, looks like a potential star after averaging a team-best 6.6 yards per carry last year. Speedy newcomer Donald Pinkerton, a freshman scatback, is another possibility. Also helping out will be fullbacks Clint Leschber and Jamie Tyler. Leschber, a senior, has more experience, but sophomore Tyler is the more promising player, both running the ball and blocking. Tyler managed 614 yards rushing in limited time last season.

Bookend junior tackles Aaron Sandoval (6-2, 285) and Rod Beavan (6-2, 285) are the keys to the offensive line, which returns only one other starter in senior guard Neal Gray (6-2, 275). In no offense is an o-line more vital than in an option attack, so new center Matt Baldwin (6-2, 275) and right guard Heath Fowler (6-3, 285) must step up quickly.

Defense The Owls season will probably be made or broken based on the play of the defense, specifically the

front seven. Among the defensive line and linebackers, only two starters from '98 return—defensive tackle Judd Smith and linebacker Dan Dawson.

Three starters—Terrence Melton, Andrew Hughes and Julian Duncan—must be replaced along the defensive line. This from a unit that was 88th in the nation in rush defense. Therefore, quality performances from Smith, a 280-pound senior tackle are important. The linebacking corps must replace all-leaguer Rashad Reynolds.

On the other hand, the secondary returns three starters—corner Adrian Sadler and safeties Travis Ortega and LonDee Smith—and has several viable candidates for the opposite corner, including senior Karlton Bedford, who was slowed by a groin pull for much of '98.

Teams will run the ball against Rice, they'll probably control the ball. But neither can get out of hand if the Owls expect to be successful.

Special Teams Senior Scott Grimes was the primary kicker last season, but after converting just 4 of 9 field goal tries, it appears that sophomore Derek Crabtree has taken over the post. Victor Young will handle the punting chores instead of Grimes (35.3 avg. in 1998), while the kick return duties are up for grabs with many of the prospective running backs, receivers and a couple of defensive backs in the running.

New Ones to Know After less than 70 carries in 1988, Griffin figures to be the primary ballcarrier and he's very green. But he'll be surrounded by talent in Richardson and Tyler, which should help him ease into the role.

Schedule The Owls went 0-3 outside the WAC last season and are staring another winless nonleague slate in the face again. After opening with much-improved intra-city rival Houston, Rice travels to Michigan and Austin, Tex. in back-to-back weeks. Both the Wolverines and Longhorns are preseason top 25 teams, the former a top 10. The most winnable nonconference tilt will be against Navy at home Sept. 25. The conference schedule is reasonable, with back-to-back road games at SMU and Fresno State the biggest challenge before concluding the season at home with UTEP.



NEAL GRAY

PHOTO COURTESY OF RICE UNIVERSITY

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

TEXAS CHRISTIAN

HORNED FROGS

Things were going so well for coach Dennis Franchione's bunch in 1998. The former New Mexico coach was sitting at 4-1 when the team packed up for the short trip north to Dallas and a Cotton Bowl date with bitter rival SMU.

Well, the Frogs were upset by the Mustangs, 10-6, sending TCU into a four-game tailspin that wasn't corrected until nearly a month later. By then, TCU's hopes of a WAC title had long since been dashed, but the program sucked it up and won its final two games and gained an invitation to the Sun Bowl to face USC. Tagged as 16-point underdogs and facing criticisms of whether it was truly bowl-worthy, the Horned Frogs went out and whipped the Trojans, 28-19.

The resulting 7-5 final record represented an improvement of six games over the 1-10 Frogs of '97, and clearly established Franchione as one of the better coaches no one outside the southwest part of the country has ever heard of. The trick now, however, is to follow up with another winning campaign. That's a demanding task, indeed, but one that is undoubtedly attainable in the new Western Athletic Conference.

OK, so being that the Horned Frogs are the only current member of the WAC to play in a bowl last season, shouldn't they automatically be anointed the favorites.

"We now have confidence that we can win," Franchione noted. "But I've told our team, 'Learning to win is one thing, learning to live with winning is another. We must continue to have a passion about wanting to accomplish more.'"

The '99 Frogs should again be fairly strong on defense after ranking fourth in the WAC in points allowed, but Franchione is still tinkering with an offense that ran for two-and-a-half times more yards than it passed. Senior quarterback Patrick Batteaux, a converted wide receiver, has great wheels but not the world's greatest arm. So, the TCU brain trust is looking at Texas A&M transfer Matt Schobel and redshirt freshman Sean Stille, both of whom are better passers than Batteaux.

If Franchione is successful at generating even a little more passing, then these Frogs could be crowned WAC champs. If not, a middle-of-the-pack finish is possible.

Offense

Senior quarterback Patrick Batteaux ran Franchione's veer-like offensive scheme well, netting close to 500 yards on the ground last season. But Batteaux's passing efficiency stats—48 percent completions, just one touchdown to go with seven interceptions—were nothing short of awful. Hence, the long looks at Schobel and Stille during the spring. Of the two, Schobel looks like the more serious threat to take the starting job because he combines NFL size (6-5, 236) and a strong arm with the foot speed (4.58 speed in the 40) needed to still run the veer.

How bad was TCU's passing game? Senior Michael Scarborough's 19 receptions a year ago actually led the team. He needs to at least double that output, and look for help outside from juniors Royce Huffman and Cedric James.

There are some mighty large cleats to fill at tailback, too. Gone is second-team All-WAC performer Basil Mitchell, who rushed for 1,111 yards during the regular season and then capped off his final season with a 185-yard, two-TD gem in the 28-19 Sun Bowl upset of USC. Mitchell's replacement will be LaDanian Tomlinson, who certainly has the talent to rush for over 1,000 yards after amassing 717 yards and 8 TDs last season.

The offensive line will be young and will ultimately make or break the team's ground-oriented attack. Three returning starters—junior tackle Michael Keathley (6-4, 295), junior center Jeff Garner (6-5, 285) and junior guard Jeff Millican (6-6, 300)—will lead the way. It's up to

Franchione to replace strongside tackle Russ Sanders and guard/center Greg Davis, but some key backups return and the TCU coach created some o-line depth last season by redshirting five freshman.

Defense

The strength of TCU on this side of ball will again be the down linemen. Standout junior defensive end Aaron Schobel, considered by many to be the best run defender in the WAC, leads a five-man rotation of linemen that should be tough-as-nails again. Joining him in the normal upfront rotation will be London Dunlap, Doug Shanks, Shawn Worthen and J.W. Wilson.

The Frogs utilize an unorthodox 4-2-5 alignment geared at stopping the pass, so the pressure will be squarely on linebackers Shannon Brazzell and Terrance Maiden to plug the running gaps as well as offer short-range pass defense. Brazzell will move to strongside linebacker to replace All-WAC performer Joseph Phillips. Brazzell was impressive in spring practice, turning in scads of big plays. Redshirt freshman John Turstine (6-3, 220) is highly thought of and could push for time at either inside or outside linebacker.

The secondary of five is made up, to begin with at least, of four juniors and one key senior in All-WAC safety Reggie Hunt. An absolute hitting machine, Hunt looks primed for a huge senior season after posting 13 tackles in the spring game.

Special Teams

Junior Chris Kaylakie is a dynamite placekicker, coming off a season during which he nailed a 50-yarder among his 15 field goals in 20 attempts. Inside the 40, he's as reliable as they come at the college level, an invaluable asset in close games. Royce Huffman, one of the WAC's most versatile players, offers the unusual distinction of handling both punting and returning punts. His stats on either are only decent, but you've got to admire such multiple talents.

New Ones to Know

Sophomore tackle David Bobo was highly recruited and will play a key role as the lead tackle on many TCU option-oriented sweeps. His success, or that of someone in his stead, is imperative. Another newcomer to watch is the aforementioned Matt Schobel, the Texas A&M transfer who could possibly steal the starting quarterback job away from Patrick Batteaux.

Redshirt frosh tailback LaTarence Dunbar figures to earn some carries this fall after piling up 1,412 yards and 13 TDs in 1997 at South Oak Cliff High in Dallas. Of course, he'll have to battle LaDanian Tomlinson's primary backups Andrew Hayes-Stoker and Frank Montgomery for playing time. Tight end Marcus Shaw will also get on the field for the first time this fall. A JUCO import from San Bernardino (Calif.) Valley College, the 6-3, 248-pound Shaw redshirted last year, but figures to battle sophomore B.J. Roberts for the starting nod in 1999.

Schedule

The Frogs begin rough and finish favorably—preferable to most coaches compared to the reverse. TCU opens at home against Arizona, a consensus preseason top 5 team, before embarking on a three-game, four-week road trip to Northwestern, Arkansas State and Fresno State, the latter kicking off the WAC slate.

The flipside, of course, is that TCU gains the privilege of playing a lot at home later in the season after playing so much away early. In fact, the Horned Frogs finish the campaign with three straight home games, two of them with potential conference crown implications.

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

Western Athletic Conference

LOCATION: Fort Worth, TX
ENROLLMENT: 7,240
STADIUM: Amon G. Carter Stadium (44,830)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 7-5
COACH: Dennis Franchione
CAREER: 120-60-2; **HERE:** 7-5
BOWL: Won Sun (28-19 over USC)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Patrick Batteaux*	6-0	195	Sr.
TB	LaDanian Tomlinson*	5-11	210	Jr.
FB	George Layne	6-0	245	So.
WR	Royce Huffman*	6-0	200	Jr.
WR	Cedric James	6-3	195	Jr.
TE	B.J. Roberts	6-3	240	So.
T	Michael Keathley*	6-4	295	Jr.
G	Victor Payne	6-1	295	So.
C	Jeff Garner*	6-5	285	Jr.
G	Jeff Millican*	6-6	300	Jr.
T	David Bobo	6-5	285	So.
K	Chris Kaylakie*	6-0	190	Jr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Doug Shanks	6-3	255	Sr.
DT	Shawn Worthen*	6-1	290	Jr.
DT	J.W. Wilson*	6-3	270	Sr.
DE	Aaron Schobel*	6-4	245	Jr.
OLB	Terrance Maiden	6-1	220	So.
MLB	Shannon Brazzell*	6-0	230	Jr.
CB	Kendrick Patterson	5-11	170	Jr.
CB	Greg Walls*	6-1	170	Jr.
SS	Russell Gary*	5-10	200	Jr.
WS	Reggie Hunt*	6-0	210	Sr.
FS	Curtis Fuller*	5-10	185	Jr.
P	Royce Huffman	6-0	200	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
LaDanian Tomlinson		717	5.8	8	
Patrick Batteaux		479	3.2	3	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Patrick Batteaux		519	48.2	1	7
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Mike Scarborough		19	223	11.7	0
Michael Crawford		15	206	13.7	0
KICKING					
Chris Kaylakie, 15 of 20 FG (long 50), 25 for 26 PATs					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Reggie Hunt		111	85 unassisted		
J.W. Wilson		74	12 for losses		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Arizona	—
Sept. 11	at Northwestern	—
Sept. 25	at Arkansas State	—
Oct. 2	at Fresno State	W, 21-10
Oct. 9	San Jose State	—
Oct. 16	Tulsa	W, 17-7
Oct. 23	at Rice	L, 12-14
Oct. 30	at Hawaii	—
Nov. 6	SMU	L, 6-10
Nov. 13	North Texas	—
Nov. 20	UTEP	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	10th
Scoring Offense	8th
Total Defense	7th
Scoring Defense	4th

Western Athletic Conference

LOCATION: Fresno, CA
ENROLLMENT: 19,000
STADIUM: Bulldog Stadium (41,031)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 5-6
COACH: Pat Hill
CAREER: 11-12; **HERE:** 11-12
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

FRESNO STATE

BULLDOGS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
QB	Billy Volek*	6-2	210	Sr.	
FB	Akka-Ar Moses*	5-11	235	Jr.	
TB	Paris Gaines	6-1	220	Jr.	
WR	Atnaf Harris*	6-0	170	Jr.	
WR	Charles Smith*	5-9	175	So.	
TE	Vince Branstetter*	6-3	255	Sr.	
T	Joey Scheay	6-5	305	Fr.	
G	Rob Gatrell*	6-5	300	Sr.	
C	Mike Stovall	6-2	280	So.	
G	Amed Bhatti*	6-3	305	Sr.	
T	Kevin Jordan	6-5	295	Jr.	
K	Jeff Hanna*	6-1	195	Sr.	

DEFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
DE	Nick Burley	6-3	220	Fr.	
DT	Alan Harper*	6-2	275	Jr.	
DT	Frank Battle*	6-5	270	Sr.	
DE	Jake Probst*	6-2	240	Jr.	
LB	Tim Skipper*	5-7	200	Jr.	
LB	Rasheed Saafir*	6-1	205	Jr.	
LB	Justin Johnson	6-3	215	Jr.	
CB	Payton Williams*	5-8	175	Sr.	
CB	Dante Marsh*	5-10	190	Jr.	
S	Anthony Limbrick	6-1	195	Jr.	
S	Vernon Fox	5-10	192	So.	
P	Joel Comfort	6-1	184	Jr.	

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Paris Gaines	257	4.6	2	
Carl Holmes	101	5.1	0	

PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Billy Volek	1,973	57.9	10	3

RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Charles Smith	42	621	14.8	3

KICKING
 Jeff Hanna, 13 of 20 FG (long 47), 26 for 27 PATs

DEFENSE		
	TKLS	MISC
Tim Skipper	108	led team in tackles last 2 years
Dante Marsh	55	41 unassisted
Payton Williams	47	3 INTs

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Portland State	—
Sept. 11	at Oregon State	—
Sept. 18	at UCLA	—
Sept. 25	at Nevada	L, 24-27
Oct. 2	TCU	L, 16-24
Oct. 9	Colorado State	—
Oct. 16	at SMU	—
Oct. 23	UTEP	W, 32-6
Oct. 30	at Tulsa	—
Nov. 6	Rice	—
Nov. 13	at Hawaii	W, 51-12
Nov. 20	San Jose State	W, 24-21

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

WAC RANK	
Total Offense	8th
Scoring Offense	5th
Total Defense	9th
Scoring Defense	6th

Year No. 3 of the post-Jim Sweeney era may end up looking a lot like the first two... solid play from starting quarterback Billy Volek, not much help anywhere else, and a mediocre record at season's end.

Then again, the Bulldogs may be in better position to take advantage of the new WAC than any other squad. Volek is the man under center for a third straight season, coinciding with the term to date of coach Pat Hill. And Fresno State, while finishing 5-6 overall in '98, did manage a 5-3 conference record that included a 3-1 mark against the programs that remained with FSU in the WAC.

The problem for Hill's still-rebuilding program is a woeful lack of experience at offensive tackle. It's entirely possible that the Bulldogs will start a redshirt freshman at one tackle (Joey Scheay) and a converted defensive lineman (Kevin Jordan) at the other spot. But Hill, a former small college All-American center at Cal-Riverside and a one-time NFL line coach, should be able to develop Scheay, who looks like a star-in-the-making, and Jordan, if he's healthy after a foot injury.

The consensus is Hill is in the process of constructing a WAC power heading into the 21st century. Many of his recruits, some non-qualifiers, are of Pac-10 quality. The school's Academic GamePlan has had enormous success keeping these non-qualifiers eligible.

So is this the year that the Bulldogs will be WAC top dogs? With the WAC appearing to lack a true take-charge frontrunner, Fresno State is as good a bet as any to be battling for a conference title by season's end... if the Clearasil-toting front five can hold up.

Offense Volek was the second-rated passer in the WAC a year ago and is the top-rated among the WAC's returners. He came up just 27 yards shy throwing for 2,000 yards and completed 58 percent of his attempts. He is an intelligent leader and a good decision-maker as evidenced by his 3-to-1 ration of touchdowns to interceptions (27/9) over the last two seasons. In '98, he tossed 10 TD passes and ran for four more while throwing only three interceptions.

Developing a quality backup to Volek remains a priority for Hill and staff. The reason? They are planning on redshirting David Carr, a junior, to allow him two years of starting (2000, 2001) once Volek leaves. With Volek's reckless playing style and the inexperience at tackle, an injury to the starting QB is possible. Therefore, redshirt sophomore Drew Johns or freshman Jeff Grady (enrolled in January) must step up quickly.

Finding steady, swift targets to throw to may be more of a challenge, although the Bulldogs do have a promising sophomore, Charles Smith, who hauled in 42 passes as a freshman. Either junior Atnaf Harris or Rodney Wright is the most likely to start opposite Smith.

The offensive line's ability to protect Volek will be key to the season. Two senior guards, Amed Bhatti (6-3, 305) and Rob Gatrell (6-5, 300), are the only returning starters, so Hill's expertise at developing linemen will be tested. Look for redshirt freshman Joey Scheay and converted defensive lineman Kevin Jordan to start at the tackles lots and either Rodney Michael or Mike Stovall to get the nod at center.

Junior back Paris Gaines is expected to be the primary ballcarrier, with junior fullback Akka-Ar Moses and senior tailback Carl Holmes also seeing plenty of

action. If Moses isn't careful, talented freshman Derrick Ward could steal some of his carries at fullback.

Defense The defensive front should be a strength, with ends Seandale Jackson and Jake Probst as well as tackle Alan Harper (all juniors) anchoring the group. A new name to file away is that of redshirt freshman Nick Burley. Hill's staff is so confident that Burley is going to be an explosive force off the edge that they moved 1998 starting end Justin Johnson to weakside linebacker, where he'll replace Bobby Brooks. Another redshirt freshman defensive lineman who could make an impact is Ramsey Venner, who turned heads with eight tackles and two sacks in the spring game.

Junior linebacker Tim Skipper is remarkable in that his lack of size (5-7 and 200 pounds) hasn't prevented him from leading the Bulldogs in tackles in each of the last two seasons, cracking the 100-tackle mark each time. The move of Johnson to outside backer gives Hill three returning starters in the middle of his defense—the other being junior Rasheed Saafir.

Safeties Cory Hall (a third round pick of the Cincinnati Bengals this spring) and Efrain Guizar have graduated, but Hill is confident because Vernon Fox and Anthony Lambrick possess superior athletic skills to their predecessors and only need playing time in order to develop. While they mature, cornerback Payton Williams will be the leader of the secondary, along with fellow junior Dante Marsh.

Special Teams Jeff Hanna is a reliable kicker, having made 13 field goals in 20 tries and missing only one PAT. Williams is an exciting punt returner, ranking second in the WAC with a 14.3 yard per return average including a 66-yard touchdown, while Smith handles the kickoff return duties. The \$64,000 question is whether Joel Comfort, a walk-on redshirt junior from Modesto Junior College, can replace All-WAC punter Jeff Roberts. It won't be easy. Roberts was one of the best punters in Fresno State history.

New Ones to Know Burley, the 6-3, 220-pound rush end from East Palo Alto, California, is expected to burst on the scene as a redshirt freshman. Burley made quite an impression on the Fresno State coaches during his redshirt season—enough of one, in fact, that they gave him a starting job. The two new offensive tackles (Scheay and Jordan) will be under the microscope too. One false move and Volek could be flat on his back. And of course, punter Joel Comfort will try to make folks in Fresno forget All-WAC selection Jeff Roberts. No small task there.

Schedule The Bulldogs have a nonconference schedule that offers significant hope for success. The opener against Portland State is followed by a visit to Corvallis, Ore. to face the Beavers of Oregon State. Two more road games follow, at UCLA and at Nevada, before the WAC opener at home against TCU Oct. 2. FSU could realistically go 4-1 or at least 3-2 outside the conference. A winning season and a run at WAC crown is very attainable.

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

TULSA

GOLDEN HURRICANES

Western Athletic Conference

LOCATION: Tulsa, OK
ENROLLMENT: 4,400
STADIUM: Skelly Stadium (40,385)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 4-7
COACH: Dave Rader
CAREER: 48-74-1; **HERE:** 48-74-1
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 44

The dilemma that Tulsa head coach Dave Rader faces isn't apparent until last year's team statistics are examined.

For instance, look at last season's offensive numbers. The Golden Hurricanes ranked a very solid fifth in the former 16-team WAC in yardage gained in '98, yet wound up 13th in scoring. How can that be? Turnovers, for one. The 'Canes were a minus-6 for the season. Also, red zone efficiency. Only Hawaii was worse in the conference.

Rader will attempt to overcome the problem with an offense that returns six starters—half of whom are offensive linemen. The first order of business is finding a quarterback to replace three-year starter John Fitzgerald (58% completion percentage last year). The question for Rader is whether he wants to go with seasoned junior Michael Wall, a two-year backup with five career college starts, or hotshot freshman Josh Blankenship, a hometown Tulsa boy who won Oklahoma High School Player of the Year honors in 1998.

With the team looking for its first winning season in eight years, bet on Rader going with the experience. The only other going holes on offense are at tight end (where Tony Fisher's shoes must be filled) and the defensive line, which was hard hit by graduation.

"We will have to fill some holes on both sides of the ball, specifically on the defensive line and at tight end," said Rader, who was surprisingly given a four-year contract extension through the year 2002 despite the team's struggles. "We must also dramatically improve our field goal kicking (only five of 12 FGs made in 1998)."

Offense Wall completed better than 55 percent of his throws a year ago, but had twice as many interceptions (eight) as touchdowns (four). He has game experience, but the freshman Blankenship has the Tulsa roots and a much bigger upside. Blankenship threw for 3,119 yards and 40 TDs last season, completing 64.6% of his throws.

At the very least, Wall or Blankenship will have two quality targets to aim for. Sure, Wes Caswell has graduated, but senior Damon Savage can be electrifying, and will be looked to for significantly more production than last year's respectable though not eye-popping 42 receptions. Jerrold Smith, the Golden Hurricanes' third leading receiver in 1998, also returns. Sophomore flanker Willie Ponder also has big-play capabilities. The Golden Hurricanes have a variety of weapons, but they still believe Savage will be the go-to receiver.

The running game is in the hands of senior John Mosley, who was semi-productive in restricted duty last season. Junior Kevin Isham may also help, but Tulsa depth in the backfield overall is subpar.

The offensive line has three key returners: junior center Steve Schiller (6-5, 290), junior guard Steve Wiedower (6-3, 280) and senior tackle Anthony Ratika (6-5, 282). Filling the other two spots between now and the Sept. 4th opener vs. Southwest Missouri State is another priority for Rader and his staff.

Defense The Golden Hurricanes return the conference's best linebacking trio in senior Jeremy McClure, junior Ashon Farley and sophomore Philip Adobe. All three were mainstays on last year's team, and should be that much better in '99.

The defensive front, on the other hand, appears thin. Junior end Chris Odom (6-4, 245) is the lone returning starter. The rest of the starting d-line will be made up of some combination of old faces in seniors Andy Taylor and Mike Jones and new ones in redshirt junior defensive end Damon Robinson (13 sacks at Mesa Community College back in 1997) and redshirt freshman tackle Beau Gray (145 tackles and 10 sacks as a high school senior in

Frederick, Oklahoma).

The secondary looks solid. Senior Todd Franz is more hyped, but junior free safety Chris Miller led the 'Canes secondary in tackles and interceptions. Tulsa returns two other starters, but neither is listed as a starter on the spring depth chart. Instead, junior Sedrick Lusk is slated to be a corner, and Harold Burgess, a sophomore, is the strong safety to begin the campaign over returnee Spencer Bragg. Redshirt junior Gavin Eagle could also figure into the mix.

Special Teams Sophomore Chris Earnest, who nailed 2 of 4 field goal tries, but blew two PATs in three chances, inherits the kicking duties. Tulsa basically has nowhere to go but up in this department. Incumbent Casey Lipscomb, the punter as a freshman, will likely retain his role.

Tulsa has a plethora of good candidates for kick returning honors, including Savage and Smith. Senior DB Spencer Bragg is a more likely choice, however, after handling punts for much of '98.

New One to Know There will be locals who will push for Rader to start the homegrown Blankenship under center. After all, he was the high school Player of the Year in Oklahoma last year. Four new faces could make an impact on defense, three of them in the front seven. That threesome is 6-2, 249-pound junior sackmeister Damon Robinson at defensive end (he redshirted last season after a stellar JUCO career at Mesa Community College), 6-2, 280-pound redshirt freshman defensive tackle Beau Gray, and 6-2 redshirt freshman strongside linebacker Brad Hawkins. In the secondary, keep an eye on Gavin Eagle, a JUCO import who redshirted last season. He could push his way into the starting lineup this year.

Schedule The opener against Southwest Missouri State should be a cruise, but then the Golden Hurricanes play three straight on the road, including trips to Big 12 sites Oklahoma State and Texas A&M. The good news is that Tulsa plays four of its final five games at home. The only time the Hurricanes leave home after Oct. 16 will be a road stop at Texas-El Paso Nov. 6.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TULSA UNIVERSITY
 DAMON SAVAGE

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-8

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Michael Wall	6-4	205	Jr.
RB	John Mosley*	5-9	200	Sr.
WR	Damon Savage*	5-11	185	Sr.
WR	Jerrold Smith*	5-11	190	Sr.
FL	Willie Ponder	6-0	195	So.
TE	Pete Muther	6-2	260	Sr.
T	Don Douglas	6-4	275	Sr.
G	Aaron Haddock	6-4	305	So.
C	Steve Schiller*	6-5	290	Jr.
G	Steve Wiedower*	6-3	280	Jr.
T	Anthony Ratika*	6-5	282	Sr.
K	Chris Earnest	6-2	195	So.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Chris Odom*	6-4	245	Jr.
DT	Andy Taylor	6-1	270	Sr.
DT	Beau Gray	6-2	280	Fr.
DE	Damon Robinson	6-2	249	Jr.
OLB	Philip Adobe*	6-1	207	So.
MLB	Jeremy McClure*	6-2	235	Sr.
OLB	Ashon Farley*	5-11	220	Jr.
CB	Sedrick Lusk	5-11	180	Jr.
CB	Todd Franz*	6-1	190	Sr.
SS	Harold Burgess	5-11	190	So.
FS	Chris Miller	5-9	185	Jr.
P	Casey Lipscomb*	6-0	220	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
John Mosley		427	6.4	5	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Michael Wall		711	55.4	4	8
Robert Stephenson		154	44.0	0	0
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Damon Savage		42	488	11.6	5
Jerrold Smith		33	383	11.6	3
KICKING					
Chris Earnest, 2 of 4 FG (long 29), 1 for 3 PATs					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Ashon Farley		71	2 fumbles rec.		
Ryan Cook		66	2 fumbles caused		
Chris Miller		62	3 INTs		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	SW Missouri State	W, 49-14
Sept. 11	at Oklahoma State	W, 35-20
Sept. 18	at Texas A&M	—
Sept. 25	at San Jose State	—
Oct. 2	Rice	L, 10-14
Oct. 16	at TCU	L, 7-17
Oct. 23	Hawaii	—
Oct. 30	Fresno State	—
Nov. 6	at UTEP	—
Nov. 13	Northeast Louisiana	—
Nov. 20	SMU	L, 3-33

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	5th
Scoring Offense	13th
Total Defense	8th
Scoring Defense	11th

Western Athletic Conference

LOCATION: San Jose, CA
ENROLLMENT: 27,000
STADIUM: Spartan Stadium (31,218)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 4-8
COACH: Dave Baldwin
CAREER: 17-27; **HERE:** 8-15
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Chris Kasteler*	6-2	200	Sr.
TB	Deonce Whitaker*	5-6	180	Jr.
WR	Eric Ruhle	5-10	180	Sr.
WR	Waking Bailey*	5-9	180	Jr.
WR	Shawn Green*	6-2	195	Jr.
TE	Sean Brewer	6-4	250	Jr.
T	Chris Fe'esago*	6-3	325	So.
G	Roger Neadeau	6-3	270	Jr.
C	Bruno Contreras	6-2	295	So.
G	Jose Gomez	6-2	315	So.
T	Oscar Comeaux	6-4	270	Jr.
K	Nick Gilliam	5-7	158	Fr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DL	Abdul-Salam Noah*	6-2	275	Sr.
DL	Steve Kapphahn*	6-1	285	Sr.
DL	Samson Sherrod*	6-4	220	Jr.
OLB	Jeff Wucinich*	6-2	245	Sr.
ILB	Josh Parry*	6-2	240	Jr.
ILB	Alfonso Moran*	6-0	230	Jr.
OLB	Tony Quintero	6-2	220	Jr.
CB	Chris Lawson	5-10	180	Sr.
CB	Maurice Love	5-9	180	Sr.
S	Malakai Uhi	5-10	200	Jr.
S	Anwar Johnson	5-9	176	So.
P	Tim Morgan	6-6	215	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Deonce Whitaker	719	5.4	7
PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD
Chris Kasteler	1,505	52.0	12
RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG
Waking Bailey	23	359	15.6
Casey LeBlanc	23	193	8.4
KICKING			
Tim Morgan 1 of 2 FGs (long 46), 0 of 0 PATs			
DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC	
Josh Parry	76	6 passes def.	
Alfonso Moran	72	3 for losses	
Jeff Wucinich	69	2 fumble rec.	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Louisiana State	—
Sept. 11	at Colorado	—
Sept. 18	St. Mary's	—
Sept. 25	Tulsa	—
Oct. 2	at Stanford	W, 35-23
Oct. 9	at TCU	—
Oct. 16	at Rice	W, 20-17
Oct. 23	SMU	—
Oct. 30	at UTEP	L, 21-28
Nov. 6	Hawaii	W, 45-17
Nov. 20	at Fresno State	L, 21-24

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	11th
Scoring Offense	6th
Total Defense	15th
Scoring Defense	13th

SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS

Spartans coach Dave Baldwin hopes the third year is the charm.

The coach has mustered a pair of subpar records in his first two seasons at the helm, and the natives are starting to get restless. Baldwin is attempting to take San Jose State to the next step—that is, finishing the season with a winning record—on a shoestring budget.

Baldwin, a one-time junior college coach, saw four assistant coaches leave the program this offseason. The reason? Assistant coaches reportedly start as low as \$30,000 at San Jose State, which amounts to chump-change in the world of big-time athletics. With coaches leaving every year, it's hard to maintain continuity—even in the watered-down version of the WAC which begins play this year.

As a result, putting together consistent efforts has been a problem for the Spartans. Last year, they opened with a convincing win over Stanford, only to fall to Idaho. A solid victory over New Mexico was followed by a humiliating loss at Virginia. An upset of Rice was neutralized by a loss to Texas-El Paso the next week.

The Spartans want to put together a winning streak for a change, but will have to do so with plenty of fresh faces playing key roles. The skill positions figure to be the team's strength, with second-team All-WAC running back Deonce Whitaker returning for his junior season, and senior quarterback Chris Kasteler a year more experienced following an up-and-down '98. Sophomore backup QB Marcus Arroyo is also back after completing 54.5% of his passes as a frosh. He's undoubtedly the quarterback of the future; the question is: Does the future start now? Junior wideouts Waking Bailey and Shawn Green, both 1998 starters, are also back in the fold. The bad news? Bailey must replace his entire offensive line, including stud tackle David Loverne (now with the New York Jets).

The defense should be solid up front, with six returning starters among the down linemen and linebackers. The secondary, however, is totally untested and will be the key to the team's long-term success... or lack thereof.

Baldwin has a history of keeping his team in games it should lose big, which is a nice asset when you face a conference schedule in which no one outclasses you. The Spartans appear to lack the experienced depth to make a serious title run. Instead, more of the same four-win stuff may plague the program again.

Offense Whitaker, despite being only 5-6, seems to pick holes well and has outstanding acceleration. His 719 yards in 12 games isn't overly impressive, but he did average a sturdy 5.4 yards per carry and broke loose for seven touchdowns including a 52-yarder. The question is his durability—at 180 pounds, there's not a lot of body there to absorb the punishment. Junior Stanley Joyner and sophomore Patrick Battle may see some time carrying the ball.

Kasteler completed 52% of his throws in '98, which isn't overly impressive, but his seven interceptions in 221 attempts is very acceptable. He tossed 12 touchdown passes. Now that two-time all-leaguer Oliver Newell is gone, Kasteler, if he holds off a challenge from Arroyo, is expected to hook up often with Bailey, the offense's big-play man as well as junior Shawn Green, who is more of a possession type. San Jose State will go with a three-receiver set, which means senior Eric Ruhle also figures to get plenty of tosses in

his direction.

The offensive line is mostly untested, because the only battle-tested guy is versatile sophomore Chris Fe'esago, a 325-pounder who has played both guard and tackle. He figures to play tackle for the Spartans, who have at least two other 300-pounders in sophomores Jose Gomez and Eric Bakkedahl. Junior Oscar Comeaux (6-4, 270), a former all-conference tackle for 1997 JUCO national champ Trinity Valley (Texas) Community College, was redshirted last year with the idea that he would replace all-everything tackle David Loverne in 1999. Now, we'll have to see whether he can.

Defense The linebacking trio of senior Jeff Wucinich and juniors Josh Parry and Alfonso Moran anchor a defense that is experienced up front but as raw as marine recruits in the secondary.

The front three of seniors Samson Sherrod, Abdul-Salam Noah and Steve Kapphahn is experienced and talented. It's not likely that opposing offenses will yield much success running the ball. Tough-to-block nose guard Edgar Nava, a 6-1, 273-pound junior, returns after blowing out his knee in week two of the 1998 season. JUCO imports Greg Brinson, Bryan Yeager and Johnnie Warren will provide some quality depth.

Of course, those offenses will be eager to attack the Spartans' green group of pass-coverers. Seniors Chris Lawson, Maurice Love and Kariem McFarlin lead the cornerbacks, while senior Anwar Johnson and juniors Travis Seaton and Malakai Uhi carry the safeties. Johnson (2 INTs in 1998) must replace two-time all-league free safety Lyle West, a sixth-round draft pick of the New York Giants.

Special Teams Senior Tim Morgan, a 6-6 punter, may also be asked to handle the kicking duties, his only competition coming from redshirt freshman Nick Gilliam. Morgan will need to improve his punts—his 37.0 net average was 13th in the WAC last season. He has promise kicking field goals, though, nailing a 46-yarder late last season in a trial run. Bailey would be the logical candidate for returning kicks, but it was Whitaker who filled those duties a year ago, along with Casey LeBlanc. Don't be surprised if Whitaker is phased out of that role because of his importance to the offense.

New One to Know Pick any member of the secondary. In terms of regular playing time, they're all new. Opposing quarterbacks will look to introduce themselves in short order. The offensive line is also littered with four new faces. One to pay close attention to is tackle Oscar Comeaux, who will attempt to replace David Loverne, the 90th player picked in this spring's NFL draft.

Schedule Brutal, outside of the WAC. The Spartans' made-to-fail slate opens with back-to-back away games against LSU and Colorado, and will also play at Stanford. The trip to Palo Alto kicks off a three-week road skein that also travels to TCU and Rice. The Spartans play at home in October only once, and have just four home games overall. The season concludes with the rivalry game against Fresno State—also on the road.

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7

TEXAS-EL PASO

MINERS

To be honest, the UTEP Miners aren't particularly impressive heading into 1999. They have a total of 11 returning starters from a team that went 3-8 a year ago. A yawn on your part, at this juncture, would be understandable.

But there are two significant factors in the Miners' favor. First, they played much better last season than the win-loss record suggests. Only two of their eight defeats were considered lopsided. They lost two games within the last two minutes, and a third in overtime. Second, the new WAC just ain't the old WAC. Only TCU among the remains of what was once a 16-team grouping with a championship game even so much as finished last season with a winning record.

But head coach Charlie Bailey has some serious matters to tend to, mainly, figuring out why a defense that was so solid in '97 could give up almost 100 yards more per game in '98... and still yield slightly fewer points. Also, how to go about shaping the offense around new starting quarterback junior Rocky Perez.

The Miners do offer their share of quality players-tight end Brian Natkin, defensive end Brian Young and kicker Ricky Bishop are each legitimate post-season honors candidates. But this is a program that has been plagued by mediocrity for most of its existence. In fact, it was once worse than that, because there was a time when UTEP aspired to be mediocre, because so-so beats the heck out of lousy.

But the modern-day Miners are a determined bunch... and this season appears to open a gap of founded optimism. A few of those close defeats from a year ago turned into victories, and who knows?

Offense In limited action, Perez proved last season that he has a lot yet to learn. He threw for more than 500 yards over parts of four games but was picked off four times while throwing for a touchdown only once. His completion percentage was an unacceptable 47 percent.

To significantly improve those numbers, not only must Perez develop but so, too, must the running game in order to take pressure off the kid. Senior halfback Paul Smith is certainly a load. At 5-11 and 240 pounds, Smith reminds some observers of a slightly smaller version of Christian Okoye, the former Kansas City Chiefs back who was so dominant for a brief period earlier this decade. His running mate will be sophomore Joey Knapp, who replaces Elzie Johnson (dislocated hip in mid-1998) as the starting fullback.

The offensive line offers three returning starters, led by talented junior center Casey Clayton and senior Brent Hunt (who will move from left guard to left tackle). Hunt didn't get any reps at his new position in the spring, thanks to a broken ankle suffered playing pickup basketball just 10 days prior to the start of camp. Overall, the o-line is a group with holes, however, and not the kind that running backs are known to run through.

The passing game will only flourish if there are decent players on the other end of Perez aerials. The Miners lost accomplished wideout Jimmy Carpenter and fellow starter Keonta Golson to graduation. Junior Allan Ray and flashy sophomore Lee Mays may prove capable, but the key will be go-to tight

end Natkin, the leading receiver among UTEP returners with 34 catches in '98.

Defense Bailey would like the Miners to return to their '97 form, but somewhere between that and what transpired last season is more likely. The down linemen will be excellent, not only with Young on one side but also with Leif Larsen on the other. The two make up the conference's best duo and are capable of dominating the line of scrimmage on both running and passing downs.

UTEP will go into '99 inexperienced at line-backer. Junior Trey Merkins (6-2, 232) is the only returning starter, although senior Robert Weathers received plenty of playing time the last two seasons, finishing fourth on the squad last season in tackles. Two freshmen bear watching here as athletic outside backer Kanul High and middle linebacker Bubba Wiseman might both see significant time in 1999.

The secondary, too, will be a project. The safety spots seem set with junior Eric Gibson and sophomore A.J. Sheppard both back. The identities of the corners is anybody's guess and as a result, the Miners will be susceptible to gunslingers such as Fresno State's Billy Volek and Arizona's Keith Smith. Among the list of suspects to man the corners are senior Nick Salinas, JUCO transfer Anthony Wadley and a pair of redshirt freshmen, Camar Jackson and Crane Clemons.

Special Teams Senior Javier Sanchez isn't flashy, but he's one of the WAC's more reliable kick return men. Expect him to break at least one for the distance. Kicker Ricky Bishop is the best in the conference, coming off a season in which he hit 15 of 20 field goals, including a 48-yarder. If he improves those numbers up a bit more in '99, he'll attract NFL attention. Glenn Beard from Holmes (Miss.) Junior College will do the punting, replacing Matt Finley.

New Ones to Know Perez is the obvious man on the spot, taking over for graduated John Rayborn. The Miners rely heavily on a balanced, diversified attack. That puts the quarterback at the center of it all, as is usually the case. Other newcomers under the gun include the new cornerbacks (possibly JUCO import Anthony Wadley and one of two redshirt freshmen, either Camar Jackson or Crane Clemons). They must replace departed players David Cotchey and Darius Ellison. New punter Glenn Beard has some big shoes to fill too-those of 1998 starter Matt Finley.

Schedule After opening at home with New Mexico, the Miners have back-to-back road games at Oregon and Kansas State. Both will be retooling after graduating well-decorated quarterbacks (first-round draft pick Akili Smith at Oregon, playmaker Michael Bishop at K-state), but each represent a nasty test nonetheless. In all, UTEP faces four 1998 bowl teams on the road (Oregon, Kansas State, Arizona and TCU). The conference schedule begins at Hawaii Oct. 2. The Miners play three of their first four WAC games on the road, so the theme should be set early one way or the other.

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-7

LOCATION: El Paso, TX
ENROLLMENT: 15,166
STADIUM: Sun Bowl Stadium (52,000)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Charlie Bailey
CAREER: 26-66-2; **HERE:** 14-45-1
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 43

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE			
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT CL
QB	Rocky Perez	6-1	195 Jr.
FB	Joey Knapp	6-4	205 So.
HB	Paul Smith*	5-11	240 Sr.
WR	Lee Mays	6-4	190 So.
WR	Allan Ray	6-2	195 Jr.
TE	Brian Natkin*	6-4	240 So.
LT	Brent Hunt*	6-6	290 Sr.
LG	Lawrence Norman	6-2	300 So.
C	Casey Clayton*	6-4	270 So.
RG	Jeff Seeton*	6-5	305 Jr.
RT	Jonathan Ruiz	6-2	290 Sr.
K	Ricky Bishop*	5-9	170 Jr.

DEFENSE			
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT CL
DE	Brian Young*	6-4	275 Sr.
NT	Bobby King	6-3	260 So.
DE	Leif Larsen*	6-5	300 Sr.
LB	Hal Stansbury	6-2	240 Sr.
LB	Trey Merkins*	6-2	230 Jr.
LB	Barry King	6-2	235 So.
LB	Robert Weathers*	5-10	220 Sr.
CB	Nick Salinas	5-11	185 Sr.
CB	Crane Clemons	5-9	160 Fr.
SS	A.J. Sheppard*	5-10	185 Jr.
FS	Eric Gibson	5-11	185 So.
P	Glenn Beard	5-11	205 Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Paul Smith		660	4.4	2
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD INT
Rocky Perez		521	47.7	1 4
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG TD
Brian Natkin		34	362	10.6 3
Lee Mays		17	196	11.5 3
KICKING		Ricky Bishop, 15 of 20 FGs (long 48), 19 for 21 PATs		
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC	
Brian Young		104	8 for losses	
Leif Larsen		73	2 forced fumb.	
Robert Weathers		71	in 9 games	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	New Mexico	W, 22-19
Sept. 11	at Oregon	L, 26-33
Sept. 18	at Kansas State	—
Sept. 25	New Mexico State	L, 24-33
Oct. 2	at Hawaii	W, 30-13
Oct. 9	SMU	—
Oct. 16	at Arizona	—
Oct. 23	at Fresno State	L, 6-32
Oct. 30	San Jose State	W, 28-21
Nov. 6	Tulsa	—
Nov. 13	at Rice	—
Nov. 20	at TCU	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	WAC RANK
Total Offense	6th
Scoring Offense	11th
Total Defense	16th
Scoring Defense	12th

Western Athletic Conference

LOCATION: Honolulu, HA
ENROLLMENT: 17,353
STADIUM: Aloha Stadium (50,000)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 0-11
COACH: June Jones
CAREER: 0-0; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 44

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Dan Robinson*	6-4	215	Sr.
RB	Robert Kemfort	6-2	200	Jr.
WR	Dwight Carter	5-10	175	Sr.
WR	Attice Brooks	6-5	210	Jr.
WR	Echo Charles	6-1	240	Sr.
WR	John Kirby	6-2	175	Sr.
LT	Adrian Klemm*	6-5	320	Sr.
LG	Andy Phillips*	6-5	320	Sr.
C	Chris Smith*	6-2	270	So.
RG	Dustin Owen*	6-2	320	Sr.
RT	Kaulana Noa*	6-5	315	Sr.
K	Chad Shrout*	6-1	230	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Chuck Thompson	6-2	255	So.
DT	Tony Tuioti*	6-1	285	Sr.
DT	Matt Elam*	6-2	270	Sr.
DE	Olen Rosehill	6-2	275	Jr.
LB	Jeff Ulbrich*	6-1	245	Sr.
LB	Matt Paul*	6-3	245	Sr.
LB	Bobby Morgan	6-1	220	So.
CB	Quincy LeJay*	5-9	183	Jr.
CB	Shawndel Miller	5-10	175	Jr.
S	Nate Jackson*	5-10	150	So.
S	Dedrick Miller	6-2	205	Jr.
K	Chad Shrout*	6-1	230	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Avion Weaver	162	4.5	0
Derek Zoller	140	3.3	1

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Dan Robinson	2,155	46.0	11	12

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Dwight Carter	40	567	14.2	3
Davey deLaura	11	130	11.8	0

KICKING	FGs	PATs
Chad Shrout, 7 of 15 FGs (long 36), 10 for 15 PATs		

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Anthony Smith	103	66 unassisted
Matt Paul	100	4 for losses
Tony Tuioti	66	2 fumble rec.

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	USC	—
Sept. 11	Eastern Illinois	—
Sept. 18	Boise State	—
Sept. 25	at SMU	L, 0-28
Oct. 2	UTEP	L, 13-30
Oct. 9	Rice	—
Oct. 23	at Tulsa	—
Oct. 30	TCU	—
Nov. 6	at San Jose State	L, 17-45
Nov. 13	Fresno State	L, 12-51
Nov. 20	Navy	—
Nov. 27	Washington State	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

WAC RANK	
Total Offense	15th
Scoring Offense	16th
Total Defense	13th
Scoring Defense	15th

HAWAII

RAINBOW WARRIORS

The new era of Hawaii football under new coach June Jones should be an exciting one. Of course, compared to the previous regime watching grass grow might get the adrenaline flowing.

The Rainbow Warriors endured the ultimate embarrassment in 1998—a winless season. 0-11. Nada W's.

So, Fred von Appen is out, Jones is in. A former NFL quarterback and quarterbacks coach, Jones also tried his hand at being a head coach at the pro level, guiding the Atlanta Falcons for three seasons (1994-96) and leading them to the playoffs in '95. He was offensive coordinator with the San Diego Chargers last year but opted to accept an offer from Hawaii and turn down a lucrative offer to stay with the Chargers.

Jones, an alum of UH from the early 70s, is expected to bring his wide-open brand of offense to the program, the preseason depth chart indicating a preference for a one-back, three-receiver alignment that will occasionally utilize four wideouts.

Jones says the quarterback job is wide open with seniors Dan Robinson and Josh Skinner as well as true freshman Mike Harrison all in the mix. Figure on one of the seniors getting the nod. Robinson was the starter for most of last season, but his numbers—46 percent completions, 12 interceptions—weren't favorable. Skinner started two games and wasn't the second coming of Jo Montana either. But Harrison is still a teenager—a talented one, but still a teenager—and his time will come, maybe as soon as in 2000.

Running back Charles Tharp was suspended by Jones for violation of "unspecified team rules." It's unclear whether he'll be back. Tharp was their leading rusher and receiver of a year ago, in effect leaving two holes if he departs for good.

Still, the Warriors are clearly better off than they were at this time a year ago. They return 13 starters and play a significantly easier schedule because of the split-up of the WAC. Jones, like any first-year coach, will need time to implement his philosophies and get a leg-up on recruiting. But with his background and roots, the process should be abbreviated.

Offense Robinson and Skinner offer the classic comparisons—Robinson is more experienced, while Skinner arguably has more upside. The fact that both are seniors might eventually tip the scales toward Skinner, who was the opening-game starter of '98. Whoever wins the job is probably just keeping it warm for either Harrison (33 TD passes in 1998 for Maywood High in Lakewood, California) or whatever gunslinger Jones recruits next February.

In order to implement the run-and-shoot, Jones will need to find some receivers now that starters Wesley Morris and Eleu Kane have exhausted their eligibility. With those two gone, senior Dwight Carter (40 catches, 567 yards, 3 TDs) likely becomes the go-to guy. A contingent of four JUCO transfers—led by 6-5, 210-pound Attice Brooks from San Francisco City College—will also get long looks at wideout.

If Tharp doesn't come back, the Hawaii running game will rely on untested ballcarriers such as juniors Avion Weaver and Robert Kemfort. The offensive line should be decent, with all five starters back in Andy Phillips, Brian Smith, Chris Smith, Dustin Owen and all-WAC candidate Kaulana Noa. The unit will need to become more polished at pass blocking with Jones set to install the run-and-shoot.

Defense Junior Anthony Smith and senior Matt Paul are the two best athletes on the Hawaii defense,

and that's evident not only by their tackling stats of a year ago—during which each player eclipsed the 100-tackle mark but also because each have switched positions during their college careers, Smith from linebacker to defensive back, Paul from defensive end to linebacker.

There are plenty of other sources of inspiration, such as senior defensive tackles Tony Tuioti and Matt Elam. The unit was dominated a year ago, so rising to the top of the WAC isn't expected.

But the Hawaii defense should do much better than last year, if Jones can retool a thin secondary and find a young leader to build around. Two starters are back in cornerback Quincy LeJay and free safety Nate Jackson. The strong safety will come down to a battle between returnee Phil Austin and JUCO import Dedrick Miller (6-2, 205), a second-team junior college All-American at Northwest Mississippi College. Another JUCO transfer, Shawndel Tucker, should nail down the other starting corner spot. A West Los Angeles College product, Tucker enrolled at Hawaii for the spring semester and is blessed with 10.5 speed in the 100 meters.

As far as finding a defensive leader, Jones may have found his man in freshman linebacker Pisa Tiniosamoia. That is, if Tiniosamoia ever makes it to Honolulu. Academic questions and off-the-field problems forced Texas, UCLA, Arizona and Colorado from continuing to recruit Tiniosamoia, a big-time talent who earned the San Diego Tribune's Offensive and Defensive Player of the Awards in different seasons at Vista High of the highly regarded Palomar League of north San Diego. Right after committing to the Rainbows in February, Tiniosamoia was sentenced to 270 days in a youth correctional facility for his January 13 conviction on two counts of felony assault. If he can somehow get his life in order, Tiniosamoia could blossom into a star because he's a Pac-10 talent playing in the watered-down WAC.

Special Teams Chad Shrout returns and appears stuck with both the punting and placekicking chores. He will need to improve on his 7-of-15 field goal performance of '98. His punting average of 38.7 was fair, but it could stand some building on as well. Jones will stage an open competition for kick returner, both punts and kickoffs. Senior Jauron Pigg and junior Ricky Lumford are potential candidates, as is sophomore Robert Grant, who handled some kickoffs toward the end of last season.

New Ones to Know Assuming Tharp doesn't return, Weaver and Kemfort gain the spotlight. Jones' offense is pass-oriented, so look for NFL-sized wideout Attice Brooks (6-5, 210) to make an immediate impact. Tiniosamoia could be a blue-chipper too, if his legal troubles remain behind him. And JUCO transfers Miller and Tucker could see time right away in Hawaii's thin secondary.

Schedule The Rainbow Warriors aren't likely to end their 18-game losing streak in the opener, when they host nationally-ranked USC, but the Sept. 11 bout with Eastern Illinois, also at home, looks logical. Overall, the Warriors play eight of their 12 games at home. A split of those, even without a road win, would mark significant improvement. Oddly, for the second straight year UH plays two non-conference games after their conference slate is complete—against Navy and Washington State, both at home.

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-8

INSIDE THE WAC

■ **TEAM ON THE RISE:** SMU has almost got itself to the point it was in the mid-1980s, and this time without anything sneaky or underhanded. But a conference title run, if it comes, may last only a year because June Jones already has Hawaii gaining momentum. As does Pat Hill at Fresno.

■ **TEAM ON THE FALL:** UTEP, but only long enough to re-tool. The Miners are past their days of routine last-place finishes.

■ **OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:** Fresno State quarterback Billy Volek, as long as he gets a semblance of pass protection, will nose out SMU's Rodnick Phillips, primarily because everyone will realize that SMU was successful more for its defense.

■ **DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:** Jason Simonton, SMU. A modern-day Mike Singletary.

■ **MUST-SEE GAMES:** Fresno State at SMU, Sept. 16: Volek against the conference's best "D," in the Mustangs' home WAC opener. UTEP at Hawaii, Oct. 2: The Rainbow Warriors end their conference losing streak at 12. SMU at TCU, Nov. 6: A great rivalry with conference title implications. Beware, because it's the Frogs' turn to pull an upset.

■ **MOST UNDERRATED PLAYER:** Deonce Whitaker, San Jose State. He's often dismissed as a legit running back because he's 5-6, but he's a kick to watch... and he piles up the yardage.

■ **NEXT STOP NFL:** Simonton's lack of size will hurt him, but someone may take a run at him late in the draft because of his heart. Defensive lineman Brian Young of UTEP is the real deal as a defensive tackle.

■ **JOHNNY ON THE SPOT:** Patrick Batteaux, QB, TCU. A lot more is expected of this young man than he brought to the table a year ago. Batteaux, a converted wide receiver, has great feet, but not the world's greatest arm. If Batteaux can't throw any better in 1999, the TCU brain trust will turn to either Texas A&M transfer Matt Schobel or redshirt freshman Sean Stille, both of whom are better passers.

■ **RECRUITING WINNERS AND LOSERS:** Hawaii, with recognizable June Jones, and Fresno State (because everyone loves California) did well. The classes of TCU and Rice were rated above-average, mainly because of the quality of their respective head coaches. UTEP failed in its own state (as usual) but pulled some talent out of New Mexico.

■ **ODDS AND ENDS:** One of the factors surrounding the perceived parity is the lack of quality quarterbacks. Billy Volek of Fresno State is the class of the class, but the other returning QBs are mostly coming off disappointing seasons... The WAC is not officially a part of the BCS, which means if the conference champ were to go 11-0 during the regular season, as Conference USA's Tulane did a year ago, there would still be no guarantee of a major bowl bid. Tulane ended up playing in the Liberty Bowl.

WAC MINI-FEATURE

Parity Isn't Pretty, but it Sure Can be Exciting

Predicting that the entire eight-team Western Athletic Conference will finish within three games of one another—the champion going 5-2 in conference play and the cellar-dwellers 2-5—may appear like a cop-out. But the truth is that none of the teams stick out helmet and shoulder pads above the others.

So the question begs, is this parity, or parody. The former is preferred.

Yes, SMU appears to have the best defense of the lot as well as the potential leading rusher in the conference. And that's why we notched them a game above a pack of contenders. But the Mustangs are favorites with plenty of unanswered questions surrounding their passing attack, defensive depth and the kicking game. Their bid for conference supremacy could blow up in their face in a hurry.

And that goes for every team in the conference.

None of the WAC's eight programs has enjoyed any recent domination. Instead, every single one has been mired mostly by mediocrity, occasionally by futility. Only Fresno State has a program associated with perennial success anytime recently, and we can't fathom picking a team with literally little offensive line experience to win it. The Bulldogs are as high as we have them because they sport the conference's best quarterback, plain and simple.

On the positive side of parity is that the bottom-feeder-Hawaii last season is closer to contention than it otherwise might be. The Rainbow Warriors are not doomed for another winless campaign, not in this league. In another year, they may be a favorite.

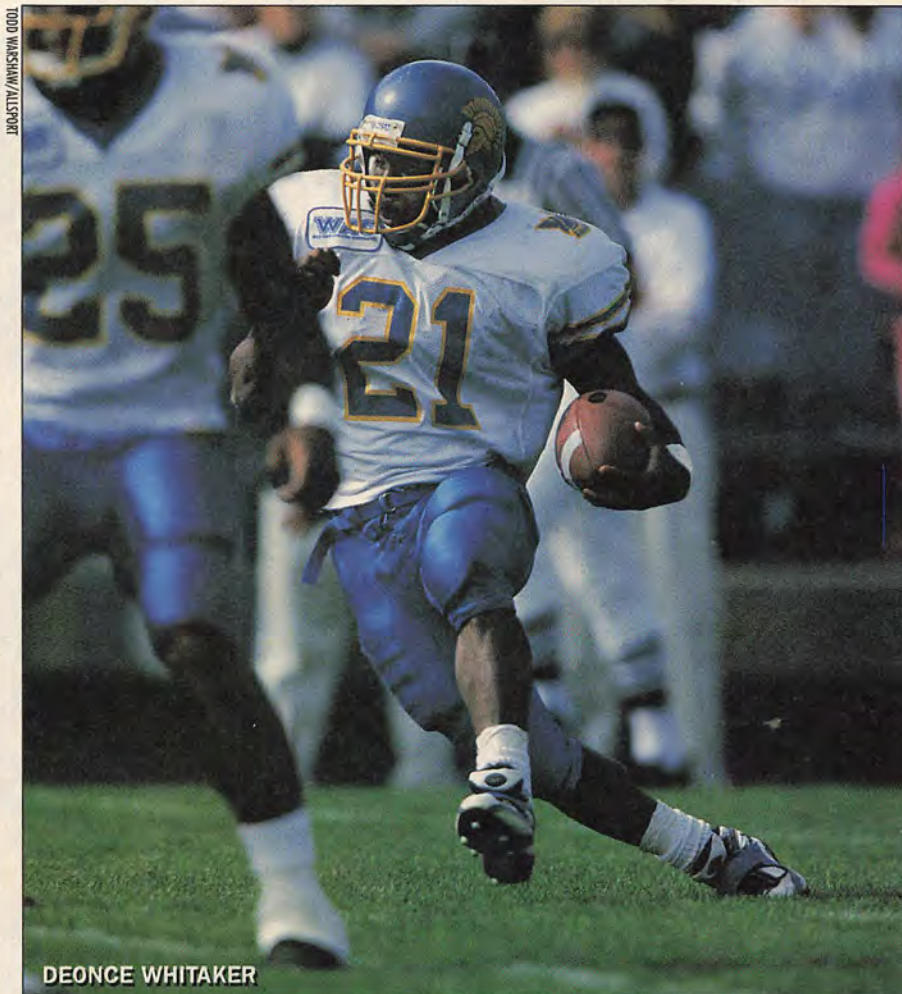
It will come down to injuries. It always does, especially in a balanced conference such as this. The program that avoids the crippling injuries to key personnel will persevere.

The WAC won't gain the attention that the Big-10, or Pac-10, or even the Mountain West is likely to garner... But the race for the title is probably going to be at least equally dramatic.

Fresno State's
BILLY VOLEK



BOB BAHR/ALLSPORT



DEONCE WHITAKER

TOO WARSHAW/ALLSPORT

Independents

BY JOE SANTOLIKUITO

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Tim Rattay	Louisiana Tech	6-1	200	Sr.
QB	Jarious Jackson	Notre Dame	6-0	220	Sr.
RB	Tony Driver	Notre Dame	6-2	210	Jr.
RB	Bobby Ray Tell	Louisiana Tech	5-6	190	Sr.
WR	Bobby Brown	Notre Dame	6-3	193	Sr.
WR	James Jordan	Louisiana Tech	6-3	210	So.
TE	Jabari Holloway	Notre Dame	6-3	258	Jr.
OT	Jordan Black	Notre Dame	6-6	313	So.
OG	Mike Gandy	Notre Dame	6-4	296	Sr.
C	Terrence Anderson	Navy	5-11	265	Sr.
OG	Shane Pittard	NE Louisiana	6-4	290	Sr.
OT	Joey Chustz	Louisiana Tech	6-7	310	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DE	Jon Foster	NE Louisiana	6-2	252	Sr.
DT	Brad Williams	Notre Dame	6-5	280	Sr.
DT	Otis Pitts	Louisiana Tech	6-1	285	Sr.
DE	Lamont Bryant	Notre Dame	6-3	250	Sr.
LB	Anthony Denman	Notre Dame	6-2	230	Jr.
LB	Damon Harrington	Louisiana Tech	6-1	225	Sr.
LB	Rocky Boiman	Notre Dame	6-4	238	So.
CB	Jeff Fye	Central Florida	5-8	150	Sr.
CB	Pat Dennis	NE Louisiana	6-0	203	Jr.
FS	A'Jani Sanders	Notre Dame	5-10	193	Sr.
SS	Deke Cooper	Notre Dame	6-2	219	Sr.

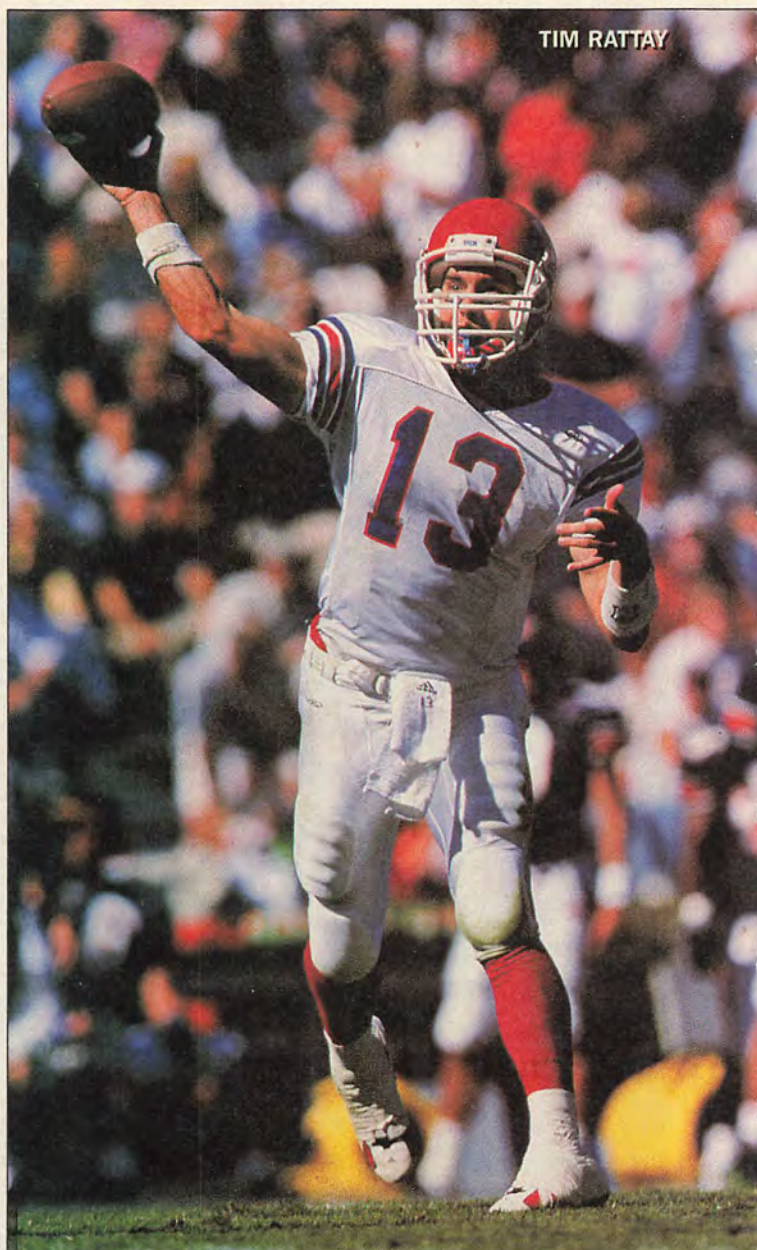
SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Jim Sanson	Notre Dame	6-0	185	Sr.
P	Calib Price	Louisiana Tech	5-9	160	Sr.
KR	Tony Driver	Notre Dame	6-2	210	Jr.

PROJECTED FINISH

OVERALL

1. Notre Dame	9-3
2. Louisiana Tech	7-4
3. Central Florida	6-5
4. Northeast Louisiana	5-6
5. Navy	4-8
6. Southwestern Louisiana	3-8
7. Middle Tennessee State	3-8



TIM RATTAY

TOM HAUCK/ALLSPORT

NOTRE DAME

FIGHTING IRISH

"When you look at 1999, it's exciting because we're a young team, but we're going to be a talented team," says Davie.

Notre Dame team might struggle early and then come on strong at the end of the season. The Irish lost four of five starting offensive linemen, plus the school's all-time leading rusher in Autry Denson.

But Davie has stability at quarterback in fifth-year senior Jarious Jackson, who returns at close to 100% after a late season knee injury vs. LSU. Ultimately though, this team's 1999 fortunes might rest on the rebuilt offensive line and Tony Driver. Possibly the most gifted athlete in the program, Driver will move from safety to tailback, where he will be asked to pick up some considerable slack (namely, Denson's lost 1,176 rushing yards) behind a revamped offensive line. On defense, the Irish seem stable up front, but will sorely miss linebackers Kory Minor and Bobbie Howard, the team's leading tackler last year.

Offense Jackson, the team's captain this fall, finished his injury-shortened 1998 season ranked 13th nationally in passing efficiency (149.5). His 55.4% completion percentage was fifth-best in Notre Dame history and his 2,181 yards of total offense was fourth-best all-time among Notre Dame quarterbacks.

The major questions on offense are whether Jackson will be planted in the ground each time he drops back to pass or whether the Irish can generate a consistent running attack with four offensive linemen gone to graduation, including tackle Luke Pettigout (the 19th overall pick in the NFL draft by the New York Giants), guard Jerry Wisne (the 143rd pick to Chicago) and Mike Rosenthal (149th overall to the New York Giants). That grade-A beef enabled the Irish to rank 16th nationally in '98 at 212.5 rushing yards per contest. Denson was a workhorse with 251 carries for 1,176 yards and 15 TDs in '98. He finished his career in South Bend with 4,318 career yards and 43 rushing TDs.

Look for converted strong safety Tony Driver to start at tailback. After being switched from offense to defense last fall, Driver made impressive contributions (60 tackles, 2 interceptions in 7 starts). He may be the best athlete on the team, and was a former *Parade* All-America running back who worked as a reserve there as a rookie in '97 (35 carries for 125, 3 TDs). He'll be joined in a tailback-by-committee approach by sophomore Tony Fisher (18 for 75) and junior Darcey Levy (6 for 20, 1 TD in '98).

The receiving corps is littered with familiar names, including seniors Bobby Brown (13 for 286, 1 TD in '98) and Raki Nelson (11 for 217, 2 TDs) as well as junior Joey Getherall (13 for 197, 1 TD). In addition to that threesome, sophomore speed demon Javin Hunter looks ready for a breakout year, if his inspired performance in the spring game (four catches, 143 yards, 1 TD) is any indication.

The rebuilt offensive line will be anchored by an All-American candidate in fifth-year senior center John Merandi (6-3, 299), who started every game last season, and senior right guard Mike Gandy (6-4, 296), who started two regular season games and the Gator Bowl last year. Everywhere else, there will be newcomers: sophomore left tackle Jordan Black (6-6, 313), junior right tackle John Teasdale (6-6, 306) and senior left guard Jim Jones (6-3, 307).

Defense The Irish, who will play a 4-3 defense this season, should be very strong up front, with their entire defensive front back. Returning starters include seniors Brad Williams (33 tackles) and Lance Legree (33 tackles) at tackle, plus fifth-year veteran Lamont Bryant

(49 tackles, 4 sacks) along with sophomore future star Anthony Weaver (28 tackles) at end.

If there is a defensive weakness, it comes at linebacker. Gone are four-year starter Kory Minor (245 career tackles, 22-1/2 career sacks) at outside linebacker, inside linebackers Bobbie Howard (leading '98 tackler with 118), Jimmy Friday (79 tackles) and Joe Thomas, safety Benny Guilbeaux (24 career starts, 9 career interceptions) and cornerback Ty Goode (35 tackles in '98 while starting seven games at corner).

Junior Anthony Denman (28 tackles in '98) steps into the starting lineup after serving as Minor's backup the past two years. Also watch for senior Ronnie Nicks (10 tackles), junior Hugh Holmes (4 tackles, 62 special-team appearances) and a couple of talented sophomores in Tyreco Harrison (8 tackles) and Carlos Pierre-Antoine (no tackles in 1998). Senior Joey Ferrer (26 tackles) and sophomore Rocky Boiman (114 special-team appearances) are the options for the vacancy outside. Keep an eye on Boiman, who impressed Davie with his tenacity on special teams a year ago.

In the secondary, the Irish welcome back a pair of returning three-time letterwinners in senior safeties A'Jani Sanders (58 tackles, team-leading 3 interceptions) and Deke Cooper (top returning tackler from '98 with 78, 1 interception). Senior Deveron Harper (48 tackles in '98) returns to cornerback in '98 after playing safety last year, and will likely be teamed with junior Brock Williams (40 tackles, 1 interception).

Special Teams Is it us or did it seem as if Hunter Smith was punting the past decade for the Irish? Smith, a seventh-round draft choice of the Indianapolis Colts this spring, departs after four full seasons as Notre Dame's punter, while senior Jim Sanson returns to handle field goals and PATs.

Either sophomore David Miller or highly-touted frosh Nick Setta will handle some aspect of the kicking chores, either off the tee or punting. How good is Setta? He averaged 47.8 yards per punt last year for Lockport (Ill.) High and his boots had an average hang time of 4.25 seconds. As a high school sophomore, Setta set a new state record for longest field goal with a successful 59-yarder. The Irish hope to improve their return game and coverage for '99. The most experienced returners are Driver on kick-off returns (22.3 average) and Joey Getherall (7.8 on 20 returns) for punt returns.

New Ones to Know Davie nabbed one of the nation's most sought-after players in freshman defensive back Jerome Sapp, a *Parade* All-American and *USA Today* first-team All-American. The 6-1, 205-pound Sapp, who had 122 tackles and 5 INTs at Lamar High School in Houston last fall, is so gifted that he could see time as a nickel back as a true freshman. Nick Setta, another *Parade* All-American and the No. 1-rated prep kicker in the country last season, could come in as the Irish punter.

Schedule As usual, the schedule is brutal for Notre Dame. The Irish added some new teams to the schedule: Kansas (first meeting since 1938), Oklahoma (first meeting since 1968), Tennessee (first meeting since '91) and Pittsburgh (58th overall meeting)—replacing Army, Baylor and LSU. Other '99 opponents include Michigan State (6-6 in '98), Arizona State (5-6), Navy (3-8), Boston College (4-7) and Stanford (3-8). The Irish play five straight home games from mid-September through the end of October—versus Michigan State, Oklahoma, Arizona State, USC and Navy.

PROJECTED RECORD: 9-3

LOCATION: South Bend, IN
ENROLLMENT: 10,359
STADIUM: Notre Dame Stadium (80,225)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 9-3
COACH: Bob Davie
CAREER: 16-9; **HERE:** 16-9
BOWL: Lost Gator (35-28 to Georgia Tech)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 38

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
WR	Raki Nelson*	5-11	176	Sr.
WR	Bobby Brown*	6-3	193	Sr.
LT	Jordan Black	6-6	313	So.
LG	Jim Jones	6-3	307	Sr.
C	John Merandi*	6-3	299	Sr.
RG	Mike Gandy	6-4	296	Sr.
RT	John Teasdale	6-6	306	Jr.
TE	Jabari Holloway*	6-3	258	Jr.
QB	Jarious Jackson*	6-0	220	Sr.
RB	Tony Driver	6-2	210	Jr.
FB	Joey Goodspeed*	6-0	242	Sr.
PK	Jim Sanson*	5-11	185	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Anthony Weaver*	6-3	250	So.
DT	Brad Williams*	6-5	280	Sr.
DT	Lance Legree*	6-1	287	Sr.
DE	Lamont Bryant*	6-3	250	Sr.
LB	Anthony Denman	6-2	230	Jr.
LB	Rocky Boiman	6-4	238	So.
LB	Joey Ferrer	6-2	235	Sr.
CB	Deveron Harper*	5-11	187	Sr.
CB	Brock Williams*	5-10	190	Jr.
FS	A'Jani Sanders*	5-10	193	Sr.
SS	Deke Cooper*	6-2	219	Sr.
P	Nick Setta	6-0	165	Fr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Jarious Jackson		453	3.6	4	
Joey Goodspeed		202	7.0	0	
Tony Fisher		75	4.2	0	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Jarious Jackson		1,890	55.2	12	6
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jabari Holloway		17	273	16.1	2
Bobby Brown		15	328	21.9	1
Raki Nelson		13	237	18.2	2
KICKING					
Jim Sanson, 11 FGs, 33 PATS, 66 points					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
A'Jani Sanders		58	3 INTs		
Lamont Bryant		49	4 QB sacks, 7 tackles for losses		
Brad Williams		33	5 tackles for losses		
Anthony Weaver		28	6 tackles for losses		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 28	Kansas*	—
Sept. 4	at Michigan	W, 36-20
Sept. 11	at Purdue	W, 31-30
Sept. 18	Michigan State	L, 23-45
Oct. 2	Oklahoma	—
Oct. 9	Arizona State	W, 28-9
Oct. 16	USC	L, 0-10
Oct. 30	Navy	W, 30-0
Nov. 6	at Tennessee	—
Nov. 13	at Pittsburgh	—
Nov. 20	Boston College	W, 31-26
Nov. 27	at Stanford	W, 35-17

*Eddie Robinson Classic — Notre Dame Stadium

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	ND	OPP
Rushing yards per game	221.5	143.4
Yards per rush	4.7	3.5
Passing yards per game	177.5	207.1
Completion percentage	55.2	60.3
Net yards per game	399	350.5
Points per game	30.0	20.3
Turnovers	13	23

Independents

LOCATION: Ruston, LA
ENROLLMENT: 9,667
STADIUM: Joe Aillet Stadium (30,200)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 6-6
COACH: Jack Bicknell III
CAREER: 0-0; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 52

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Tim Rattay*	6-1	200	Sr.
RB	Terry Pratt*	5-10	190	So.
RB	Bobby Ray Tell*	5-6	200	Sr.
WR	Sean Cangelosi*	6-4	218	Jr.
WR	Delwyn Daigre	6-1	200	So.
TE	David Newman*	6-7	255	Sr.
RT	Robert Skapura*	6-6	301	Sr.
RG	Rob Koontz*	6-4	280	Sr.
C	David St. Marie*	6-3	295	Sr.
LG	Randy Richard	6-5	300	So.
LT	Joe Chustz*	6-6	310	Jr.
K	Trent Wierick*	6-2	175	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Jarrett Procell*	6-3	275	Sr.
DT	Jerome King*	6-4	270	Sr.
DT	Otis Pitts*	6-1	285	Sr.
DE	Desmond Nunnery*	6-3	255	Sr.
LB	Blake Smith	5-11	220	So.
LB	Damon Harrington*	6-1	225	Sr.
LB	Quincy Stewart	6-1	215	So.
CB	Fred Lewis*	5-10	175	Sr.
CB	Roderick Pernetter*	5-11	180	Jr.
SS	Bobby Gray*	6-1	205	So.
FS	Dewey Simpson	5-10	180	Jr.
P	Calib Price*	5-9	160	Jr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING	YDS	AVG	TD
Bobby Ray Tell	549	5.4	6
John Simon	288	6.4	1

PASSING	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Tim Rattay	4,943	68.0	46	13

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
James Jordan	56	662	11.2	4
Delwyn Daigre	40	540	13.5	2

KICKING	FG	PAT
Trent Wierick	6	42

DEFENSE	TKLS	MISC
Damon Harrington	119	2 QB sacks, 7 tackles for losses
Quincy Stewart	111	1 QB sack, 4 tackles for losses

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Aug. 28	at Florida State	—
Sept. 4	Texas A&M	L, 7-28
Sept. 11	Sam Houston St.	—
Sept. 18	at Alabama	—
Oct. 2	at Southwestern Louisiana	W, 77-14
Oct. 16	Middle Tennessee St.	—
Oct. 23	at Central Florida	L, 30-64
Oct. 30	at Toledo	—
Nov. 6	Northeast Louisiana	W, 44-14
Nov. 13	at Alabama-Birmingham	W, 54-23
Nov. 26	at USC	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	LT	OPP
Rushing yards per game	107.8	170.3
Passing yards per game	432.1	232.0
Net yards per game	539.9	402.3
Points per game	41.1	33.5
Turnovers	22	19

LOUISIANA TECH

BULLDOGS

Jack Bicknell III could not have asked for a better situation to begin his coaching career. The son of former Boston College coach and current Barcelona Dragons coach Jack Bicknell of the NFL Europe, the younger Bicknell inherits one of the best quarterbacks in the country in Heisman Trophy candidate Tim Rattay. As the former offensive line coach of the Bulldogs the last two years, Bicknell got an opportunity to see up close what has been entrusted to him.

All the 6-foot-1, 200-pound Rattay did last season was throw for 4,943 yards, complete 68 percent of his passes for 4,943 yards. Bicknell also has back nine starters on offense and defense, so you'll have to excuse the smile Bicknell has worn pretty much from the moment he was announced as the 31st football coach at Louisiana Tech. Bicknell has immediately started to put his own stamp on the program, though. One of the first things he did was elevate running backs coach Clint Conque, who has been with the program for eight years, to the offensive coordinator position.

"Sometimes coaching changes are good, it really shakes things up," said Bicknell, who takes over for Gary Crowton, a brilliant offensive mind who was hired to put life into the Chicago Bears' lightweight offense. "I think that is the case in this situation. Clint Conque will do a superb job as the offensive coordinator. I could not ask for anything more."

Another change came on defense, where Bicknell demoted last year's coordinator, Todd Bradford, to the defensive backs coach, and moved Tom Masella, formerly the head coach at Boston University, in as the new defensive coordinator. "Tom came in and is doing a good job for us," Bicknell said during the spring. "We are going to be a more aggressive, attack-style defense. We are addressing some of the problems we faced on defense last year and are trying to solve them. We are keeping a lot of the good things we did last year and we should have a really improved defense."

Offense The Bulldogs will somehow have to make up for the departure of All-American wide receiver Troy Edwards, Rattay's favorite target who hauled in an amazing 140 passes for 1,996 yards last season. Edwards, the 13th player taken overall this spring by the Pittsburgh Steelers, had the speed necessary to stretch a defense and the unwavering confidence of Rattay, who threw to him at almost any time. The best bets to develop into Rattay's new go-to guys are sophomores James Jordan (6-3, 210) and Delwyn Daigre (6-1, 200).

Jordan is tall and rangy, has good speed and earned some points with Rattay last season by catching 56 passes for 662 yards and four touchdowns. Daigre pulled in 40 receptions for 540 yards and two scores. Daigre was the star of the spring game with eight catches for 151 yards. Joining them will be 6-4, 200-pound junior Sean Cangelosi, who seemed to have a knack for finding the end zone last year, catching five touchdowns.

Rattay will also have some outlets swinging out of the backfield. Senior Bobby Ray Tell, a human bowling ball at 5-6, 200 pounds, had 101 carries last year for 549 yards and six touchdowns. Senior fullback Terry Pratt (6-0, 222) is an excellent blocker and can carry the ball when a tough yard is needed to keep the sticks moving. Senior tight end David Newman (6-7, 255) is back after catching 20 passes for 245 yards and four touchdowns last year.

The line figures to be stable with four starters back. Senior David St. Marie (6-3, 295) is at center for the second-straight year, and massive 6-7, 310-pound senior left tackle Joey Chustz also returns. Senior Robert Skapura (6-6, 301) mans the other tackle spot, while 6-4, 295-pound senior Rob Koontz is slated to play right guard.

Defense Here's where the problems lie for Bicknell and the Bulldogs, who will have to replace linebackers Selu Alofipo and Adrian Fredricks. The Bulldogs were among the worst defensive teams in the nation last year. They were 87th in the country last year in total defense, surrendering 402.3 yards a game. Their scoring defense was not much better, finishing 102nd, permitting teams to score 33.2 points against them last year. Bicknell is hoping to get production from 6-1, 225-pound senior middle linebacker Damon Harrington and 6-1, 215-pound junior linebacker Quincy Stewart. The ultra-quick Harrington should thrive in Masella's new attacking system. He led the team in tackles (119) and also registered two sacks last year, while Stewart was third with 111 stops and four tackles for losses. Watch for Nathan Darby, a 6-1, 210-pound senior, to possibly fill one linebacker spot. Derrick Parker, a 6-0, 228-pound senior coming off a knee injury that forced him to miss last year, is another possibility.

The defensive line is experienced, with three starters back: Seniors Otis Pitts (6-1, 285), Jarrett Procell (6-3, 275) and Jerome King (6-4, 270). Pitts is the best of the trio. He collected 50 tackles, a team-high four sacks and nine tackles for losses in 1998.

The secondary appears strong, led by sophomore strong safety Bobby Gray. Gray collected 83 tackles and picked up three fumble recoveries last season. The free safety spot was vacated by the duo of Larry Wright and Charles Bowman, but senior Clint Davis (6-0, 180) and redshirt freshman Michael John Lenard (6-1, 190) could step in without much of a dropoff. Senior Fred Lewis (5-10, 175) and junior Roderick Pernetter (5-11, 180) return this season as the cornerbacks. Pernetter had a team-high nine pass breakups last year.

Special Teams Sophomore Trent Wierick is back to handle the placekicking, after nailing a perfect 6-for-6 last year in field goal attempts. Junior punter Calib Price also returns after averaging 40 yards per punt. Cangelosi, Tell, and reserve running back John Simon will return kicks and punts.

New Ones to Know Brandon Avance, Gerome Wallace, Eric Gibson, Curtis Randall and Mike Tubb could all get a chance to play at linebacker this season. Senior Mike Pawelczak (6-8, 235) joins the football team with the hopes of playing tight end after playing for the Bulldogs' basketball team. Among the new recruits, two freshman and one JUCO import figure to make the most immediate impact. One of the freshman is speedy linebacker Jonte Price from St. John's (La.) High; the other is Javerto January, a great athlete who figures to see time at either wide receiver or defensive back. Curtis Speller of Ventura (Calif.) College should be the impact JUCO transfer for the Bulldogs. He'll compete for the vacant safety spot.

Schedule The schedule is brutal. So while the Dawgs will have plenty of offensive bite, it's hard to imagine them getting a bowl bid. The reason? Three of the Bulldogs' first four games feature Florida State, Texas A&M and Alabama. The Florida State game will be nationally televised on ESPN2 on August 28. Then the Bulldogs close at Southern Cal. If Bicknell intends to show off Rattay to the Heisman voters, he is certainly doing in grand style. The only major concern is whether Rattay will be upright by September 5 after being chased by Florida State's and Texas A&M's usual collection of top-notch pass rushers in Weeks 1 and 2.

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

CENTRAL FLORIDA GOLDEN KNIGHTS

LOCATION: Orlando, FL
ENROLLMENT: 30,000
STADIUM: Florida Citrus Bowl (70,349)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 9-2
COACH: Mike Kruczek
CAREER: 9-2; **HERE:** 9-2
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 38

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Purdue	L, 7-35
Sept. 11	at Florida	—
Sept. 18	at Georgia Tech	—
Sept. 25	at Georgia	—
Oct. 2	Eastern Illinois	W, 48-0
Oct. 16	Nicholls State	L, 19-32
Oct. 23	Louisiana Tech	W, 63-30
Oct. 30	Eastern Michigan	—
Nov. 6	at Auburn	L, 6-10
Nov. 13	at Middle Tennessee State	—
Nov. 20	Bowling Green	W, 38-31

Welcome to the first year AD—as in “After Daunte”, as those at Central Florida are spinning it this season. The departure of the ultra-accurate all-everything quarterback to NFL riches with the Minnesota Vikings leaves a huge void to fill for Mike Kruczek in his second year as head coach. Kruczek will also have to compensate for the loss of 12 starters, not to mention what could be the toughest September slate of any team in the nation.

The most intriguing situation for Kruczek, of course, is finding someone that could come close to filling Culpepper's role. Victor Penn will be the choice. The 6-1, 175-pound transfer from Garden City Community College was a former South Carolina quarterback who earned a spot on the SEC All-Freshmen team back in 1997. He does not have Culpepper's daunting size, but he is exceptionally fast (4.65 in the 40). Penn was heavily recruited out of Miami Senior High in 1996, attracting the attention of Kansas, Baylor, Oklahoma and West Virginia.

Penn isn't the only talented newcomer on offense for UCF. Terrance Williams, a JUCO transfer from Hinds

Community College, could be the Knights' new tailback. He rushed for 1,436 yards and 16 TDs in just seven games last year. Freshman wide receiver Ellis Debrow has big-time size (6-3, 205) and looks like a big-time talent (he chose UCF over a number of SEC schools). With good-hands people Siaha Burley and Mark Nonsant gone, Debrow joins a pair of returnees—junior Kenny Clark (40 catches, 6 TDs in 1998) and senior Charles Lee (46 catches, 3 TDs)—to give Penn three reliable targets. Freshman Gabe Leavitt, whose dad was a kicker at Georgia, figures to be the Knights' kicker in 1999, replacing Fred Waczewski.

The Golden Knights could be a decent team on defense. Seven starters return, including Justen Moore, a 6-4, 265-pound senior defensive tackle who led the team in sacks (8) and tackles behind the line of scrimmage (12). Despite the loss of star cornerback Paul Miranda (a fourth-round pick of the Indianapolis Colts), the secondary should remain solid thanks to the return of Jeff Fye, a 5-8, 150-pound cornerback who hits like a truck. Fye was a one-man show in the annual Black & Gold spring game-

scoring two TDs (one on an interception return, the other on a fumble return). He'll have a partner in crime back there if JUCO import Travis Fisher (4.3 speed in the 40) is half as good as his press clippings.

If there are any holes on defense, they're at linebacker, where 6-0, 235-pound senior middle linebacker Deaubrey Devine is the lone starter back. Sophomore Tito Rodriguez is expected to step up at one of the outside linebacker spots, which will help ease the loss of tackling fool Mike Palmer.

Despite the influx of talent, Central Florida will likely be staring at an 0-4 record in the face as they head into a four-game homestand in October. The Knights host Purdue in their opener, then travel to Florida, Georgia Tech and Georgia. That's four of the nation's finest quarterbacks in four weeks: Purdue's Drew Brees; Florida's Doug Johnson; Georgia Tech's Joe Hamilton and Georgia's Quincy Carter. Yikes!!!

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA INDIANS

LOCATION: Monroe, LA
ENROLLMENT: 10,942
STADIUM: Malone Stadium (30,427)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 5-6
COACH: Bobby Keasler
CAREER: 78-34-2; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 43

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Nicholls State	W, 44-10
Sept. 11	at Minnesota	—
Sept. 18	at Arkansas	L, 13-17
Sept. 25	Northwestern Louisiana	—
Oct. 2	at Alabama-Birmingham	W, 20-14
Oct. 9	at Utah	L, 16-17
Oct. 16	Wyoming	—
Oct. 23	at Southwestern Louisiana	—
Oct. 30	Middle Tennessee State	—
Nov. 6	at Louisiana Tech	L, 14-44
Nov. 13	at Tulsa	—

Bobby Keasler returns to Northeast Louisiana, replacing Ed Zaunbrecher. After spending the previous nine years as a head coach at McNeese State, Keasler is back after serving as an assistant coach on the Indians' 1987 Division I-AA national champion. He may have to prepare himself for the changes that have taken place since he last coached on the Monroe, Louisiana campus.

Keasler inherits a team that lost its top two rushers (Alan Ricard and Richard Love) and also lost its top two receivers (Marty Booker and Tony Akins). Booker will be the most difficult of the two to replace. He caught a school-record 75 passes for 1,168 yards and 11 TDs. Combined the four lost players (Booker, Akins, Ricard and Love) scored 23 of the team's 26 offensive touchdowns last year.

All is not lost, however, since Keasler does welcome

back junior Pat Dennis, the top returning scorer on the team. The problem is, Dennis is a cornerback who returned two of his seven interceptions for touchdowns.

Keasler will look to 6-4, 180-pound sophomore Andre Vige to handle the quarterback chores again. Vige completed 136-of-284 for 1,976 yards and 17 TDs with nine interceptions. However, Vige could be pushed by newcomer Darryl Carter from Meridian Junior College. Carter has a big arm and fleet enough feet to elude the pass rush and make plays.

The answer at tailback could be Arkansas transfer Mark Henderson, while Derrick Bridges (47 receptions in 1997) should be Keasler's marquee receiver.

Keasler had a reputation at McNeese State of building stingy defenses and he has two cornerstones to build

around in the aforementioned Dennis as well as 6-2, 252-pound senior defensive end Jonathan Foster. Foster tallied 56 tackles last year, including 13 tackles for losses and seven sacks. The 6-0, 203-pound Dennis could be one of the best-kept secrets in college football. He picked off seven passes last year and had a team-high 18 pass breakups.

Keasler looks like he brought in two more pieces to the puzzle from the JUCO ranks: inside linebacker Mike DeHorney and defensive end Trey Thomas. In particular, DeHorney (6-3, 255), from Scottsdale (Arizona) Community College, appears to be the real deal. He recorded 130 tackles and forced five fumbles last year at Scottsdale.

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-6

NAVY MIDSHIPMEN

LOCATION: Annapolis, MD
ENROLLMENT: 4,400
STADIUM: Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium (30,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Charlie Weatherbie
CAREER: 39-40; **HERE:** 24-21
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 36

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Georgia Tech	—
Sept. 11	at Kent State	W, 38-24
Sept. 18	Boston College	W, 32-31
Sept. 25	at Rice	—
Oct. 2	at West Virginia	—
Oct. 9	Air Force	L, 7-49
Oct. 23	Akron	—
Oct. 30	at Notre Dame	L, 0-30
Nov. 6	at Rutgers	L, 33-36
Nov. 13	Tulane	—
Nov. 20	at Hawaii	—
Dec. 4	Army (Phila., Pa.)	L, 30-34

Navy coach Charlie Weatherbie decided to bite the bullet, so to speak, and throw a young group of Midshipmen on to the field last season. Things

became a little complicated when someone had to keep a constant vigil on Weatherbie so that the bullet didn't go off in Weatherbie's mouth, he gnashed

his teeth so hard during a 3-8 season.

This season, Navy returns 36 lettermen, plus five starters on offense, and seven on defense. Weatherbie

Independents

was very pleased with the progress his team made during the spring as they enter their final season as a Division I independent before joining Conference USA next fall.

"We had a number of young guys playing key positions last year for us," Weatherbie said. "We had young men that had to play when maybe they weren't quite ready. Hopefully, the experience they gain will pay off this year."

Expect one new wrinkle with Navy, a 3-4 defense, as Weatherbie tries to play to the Midshipmen's strength at linebacker and at safety. He feels confident senior Earl Fountain (6-0, 220) and sophomore Shaka Martin (6-2, 205) are athletic enough to create some big plays at outside linebacker. Safety Jamie Doffermeyer is a legitimate honors candidate this year after recording a team-high 125 tackles in 1998.

Two players that may not be too happy about the switch from last year's 4-2-5 scheme to the 3-4 defense are seniors David Ryno (6-3, 270) and Gino Marchetti (6-2, 240). Ryno is penciled in as the starting nose guard, backed up by Marchetti. Both should receive more than their fair share of double and triple teams.

On offense, senior all-America candidate Terrence Anderson returns at center. At 5-11, 265, Anderson is a rather stubby center, but his compact size is offset by explosive power. Junior Brian Broadwater (5-10, 190) is back after a decent season for Navy. He rushed for 679 yards and five touchdowns. He also completed 47-of-98 passes for 838 yards, with seven TDs and six interceptions.

Sophomores Raheen Lambert (5-10, 190) and Dre Brittingham (5-10, 170), senior John Vereen (5-10,

200) will handle the bulk of the rushing. Vereen has the most experience, rushing for 210 yards on just 30 carries last year for three touchdowns, while Lambert is quick, strong and probably has the biggest upside. Brittingham will get the first crack at the slotback position. He and big-play split end Ryan Read (17 catches, 25.5 yards per catch, 6 TDs) give Navy outstanding speed at the receiver spots.

With Navy about to make the move to a conference next season, the Midshipmen should finish their last season with a better record than last year. But with trips to Notre Dame, West Virginia and Rice and home dates with probable 1999 bowl teams Georgia Tech and Air Force, the Middies' final mark doesn't figure to be much better.

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-8

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Oklahoma State	L, 20-44
Sept. 11	Texas Tech	—
Sept. 18	at Houston	—
Sept. 25	Middle Tennessee State	—
Oct. 2	Louisiana Tech	L, 14-77
Oct. 9	at Washington State	—
Oct. 16	at Tulane	L, 20-72
Oct. 23	Northeast Louisiana	L, 24-34
Oct. 30	at Arkansas State	W, 21-19
Nov. 13	at Southern Mississippi	L, 0-55
Nov. 20	Wofford	—

LOCATION: Lafayette, LA
ENROLLMENT: 17,000
STADIUM: Cajun Field (31,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 2-9
COACH: Jerry Baldwin
CAREER: 0-0; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 39

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA

RAGIN' CAJUNS

First, the good news: Southwestern Louisiana doubled its victory total of 1997. Now the bad: Instead of going 1-10 in '97, the Ragin' Cajuns went 2-9 in '98. The poor output caused the ouster of coach Nelson Stokley, who was replaced by Jerry Baldwin.

Baldwin figures the best way to start rebuilding the Ragin' Cajun football program comes down to two words: Forget 1998. It's been an oft-repeated refrain the last two years, considering that once again, Southwestern Louisiana finished near the bottom of the country in nearly every statistical category. The defense was an absolute sieve last year—allowing 77 points to Louisiana Tech, 72 to Tulane, 55 to Southern Mississippi, 44 to Oklahoma State and 42 to Central Florida.

Baldwin termed the swoon of the last two years a crisis in confidence. "There's no question the confidence of the players has been shaken," Baldwin said at this press conference announcing him as the head coach of a program that has not had a winning season since 1995. "But it's starting to come back now and I can see starting to believe in themselves again. The biggest problem with us is a lack of depth and a lack of discipline, and we've already jumped on the discipline. It takes time to build up depth in terms of quality athletes."

Baldwin will have no shortage at tailback, with juniors Darren Brister, John Bernard and Elvis Joseph all returning. Brister led the team in rushing with 646 yards. Sophomore Derek Dyer showed

flashes of effectiveness at quarterback, passing for 612 yards and four touchdowns. He solidified in his hold on the starting job in spring ball, because he was much more consistent and much more mobile than his main competitor, senior Barton Folse.

The offensive and defensive lines are questions, but linebacker, where starters Dwayne Viator and Gerald Stewart return, and the secondary, which has back Matt Cieslak, Charles Woods and Mark Sylvas, appear passable. Cieslak looks like he'll be a playmaker for Baldwin, if his performance in the final spring scrimmage is any indication. In the spring game, Cieslak had an interception, a fumble recovery and a blocked punt.

PROJECTED RECORD: 3-8

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Mississippi State	—
Sept. 11	at Arizona	—
Sept. 18	Wofford	—
Sept. 25	at SW Louisiana	—
Oct. 2	Troy State	—
Oct. 9	at Arkansas	—
Oct. 16	at Louisiana Tech	—
Oct. 30	at Northeast Louisiana	—
Nov. 6	Tennessee-Martin	W, 47-33
Nov. 13	Central Florida	—
Nov. 20	East Tennessee State	—

LOCATION: Murfreesboro, TN
ENROLLMENT: 18,463
STADIUM: Horace Jones Field (30,788)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 5-5
COACH: Andy McCollum
CAREER: 0-0; **HERE:** 0-0
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 37

MIDDLE TENNESSEE ST.

BLUE RAIDERS

The powers-that-be at Middle Tennessee State hope history can come close to repeating itself, but it's going to take some time. The Blue Raiders are making the step up to Division I-A football this season after a highly successful stint at the Division I-AA level. Middle Tennessee made the announcement on February 11th, a sort of pre-Valentines Day gift to their loyal fans, who packed into Horace Jones Field at an average of 21,816 per game. The NCAA states an aspiring Division I-A program must meet its standard of 17,000 fans per game. The Blue Raiders are getting the royal-carpet treatment, rolling out new turf that was scheduled to be installed in May.

Middle Tennessee even has a new coach, Andy McCollum, who has no previous head coaching experience.

He comes to Murfreesboro after nine years as an assistant coach at Baylor and UTEP. In 1989, McCollum was the wide receivers coach at UTEP under offensive coordinator David Culley when UTEP was rated 10th in the country in passing, so expect a pass-happy offense from the Blue Raiders.

Middle Tennessee should find out fast the Ohio Valley Conference, where they came from, will be nothing like this. The Blue Raiders will be somewhat ambitious in their inaugural season as a I-A program, confronting seven of this season's opponents for the first time. The initial two meetings could have some Blue Raider players wishing they never left the cozy confines of the OVC, with trips to Mississippi State and Arizona to open the 1999 season. The Blue Raiders do

have a chance to notch their first victory as a I-A at home against Wofford on September 18th.

On offense, quarterback Wes Counts returns for McCollum. The 6-1, 197-pound redshirt sophomore worked his way into a starter's role after beginning last spring third on the depth chart. He finished last year ranked the No. 1 freshman nationally in I-AA in passing efficiency, completing 87 percent of his passes. Defensively, junior linebacker Keith Pauldo is back after leading the team in tackles (78) and tackles for losses (10 for minus-44 yards). Like the rest of the Blue Raiders defense though, Pauldo is on the small side, at 5-11, 240.

PROJECTED RECORD: 3-8

INSIDE THE INDEPENDENTS

TEAM ON THE RISE: Notre Dame would be the easy choice, but we're going to go on a long, long limb and say **Louisiana Tech** this season. The Bulldogs open with Florida State (ouch!), then follow that up with Texas A&M, and two weeks after that Alabama. With quarterback Tim Rattay leading the way, and a defense that returns a number of starters, don't be surprised if the Bulldogs pull off one upset.

TEAM ON THE FALL: **Central Florida** opens with a brutal schedule, which could place the Golden Knights in an 0-4 hole by the end of September. Coach Mike Kruczek has build up enough of a program to bounce back against the rest of the schedule. But facing Purdue, Florida, Georgia Tech and Georgia without Daunte Culpepper seems suicidal.

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: **Tony Driver, RB, Notre Dame:** A couple years ago, Driver was one of the nation's most sought-after running backs coming out of the high school ranks. This year, behind a revamped offensive front, he gets a chance to show why.

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: **Lamont Bryant, Notre Dame's senior defensive end,** made a nice comeback from off-season knee surgery in 1997 to become a key player in the Irish defense. Bryant has quickness and speed off the line, and led the Irish with seven tackles for losses last year.

MUST-SEE GAMES: **Florida State-Louisiana Tech** should be an interesting start to the season. The Bulldogs open on national TV, with their date against the Seminoles being televised on ESPN2. Notre Dame has its usual array of glamour games, but the games to focus on are at Michigan (Sept. 4), then a trip later in the season to defending national champion Tennessee (Nov. 6).

The Irish offset that with Michigan State, Arizona State, Navy, Boston College and Stanford. The five teams had a combined record of 21-35 last year.

MOST UNDERRATED PLAYER: **Notre Dame wide receiver Javin Hunter** might be overshadowed by his counterpart, Bobby Brown, at the other receiver spot, but by the end of the season, the 6-0, 185-pound sophomore could turn some heads (and not just cornerbacks trying to cover him). How athletic is Hunter? He was added as a walk-on to the Irish hoops squad last season.

NEXT STOP NFL: **Tim Rattay** may lack some size, at 6-1, 200 pounds, but expect another big-numbers year from the Louisiana Tech quarterback. His numbers, plus a rugged schedule that features national programs Florida State, Texas A&M and Alabama, will grab the attention of NFL scouts.

JOHNNY ON THE SPOT: **Victor Penn**, a 6-1, 175-pound transfer from Garden City Community College in Miami, could be placed in the unenviable position of being the next quarterback at Central Florida following Daunte Culpepper. A former South Carolina quarterback who was named to the SEC All-Freshmen team in 1997, Penn runs a 4.65-second 40-yard dash. He was also heavily recruited out of Miami Senior High in 1996, attracting the attention of Kansas, Baylor, Oklahoma and West Virginia.

RECRUITING WINNERS AND LOSERS: There is no comparison between the other independents and Notre Dame. The Irish corralled their usual bevy of Parade All-Americans, including speedster Gerome Sapp, who could be starting by the end of the season in the Irish secondary. Also, watch for freshman kicker Nick Setta to crack the lineup this season.

INDEPENDENTS PROFILE

Louisiana Tech Quarterback Tim Rattay

Tim Rattay has had to have heard all of the comparisons to the "other" guy. If not, Rattay can certainly see him yukking it up on Fox Network's NFL pregame and postgame shows every Sunday with Howie Long and James Brown, although he's looking much different now than the golden blonde bangs days that so many Louisiana Tech fans fondly remember.

Well, if you guessed Terry Bradshaw, you are correct. You also have a sense what the folks down here feel about their 6-1, 200-pound cannon-armed senior from Phoenix, Arizona. Rattay should get serious Heisman attention this season, after posting one of the best passing seasons in NCAA history last year. Rattay established a single-season school record for completions (380) and passes thrown (559), and also set standards for passing yards (4,943) and touchdown passes (46).

Rattay became only the second quarterback in Louisiana Tech history to pass for over 500 yards in a game, completing the feat four times last season, tossing for 590 against Nebraska, 524 against Central Florida, 505 versus Arkansas State and 539 versus Boise State. The numbers are mind-boggling.

This year, the nation will get to see him. Rattay opens the season against Florida State in a nationally televised game, and if Rattay holds up to the speed of the Seminoles defense, don't be surprised if he pops again later in the season.

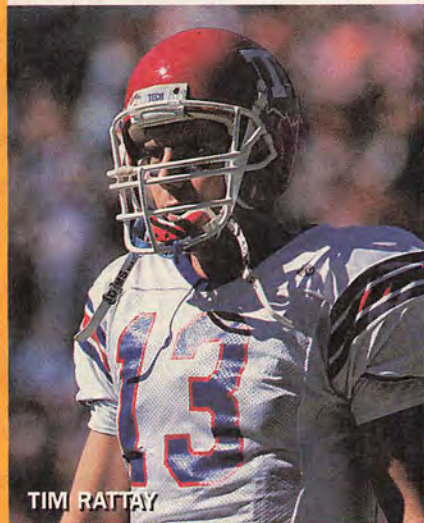
For the skeptics out there that scoff at the notion Rattay has padded his numbers against dubious opposition, consider this: In the season opener last season against stubborn Nebraska, a team full of major talent on defense, Rattay riddled the Cornhuskers for 590 yards passing, completing 46 of 68 attempts. It more than convinced a few college football pundits the kid can play.

Another thing to consider: Bradshaw, the man that Rattay is often measured against, finished with 6,589 career yards passing for Louisiana Tech. Rattay already has 8,824 yards, with one more full season left.

MARK HON/ALLSPORT



JAVIN HUNTER



TIM RATTAY

TOM HANCOCK/ALLSPORT

Conference USA

BY DAVE LINK

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
QB	Chris Redman	Louisville	6-3	225	Sr.
RB	Derrick Nix	Southern Miss	6-1	223	So.
RB	Gerard Arnold	Memphis	5-8	194	Sr.
WR	Sherrod Gideon	Southern Miss	6-0	176	Sr.
WR	Arnold Jackson	Louisville	5-8	160	Sr.
WR	JaJuan Dawson	Tulane	6-1	201	Sr.
TE	Ibn Green	Louisville	6-2	225	Sr.
OL	Bernard Robertson	Tulane	6-4	285	Jr.
OL	Jerry Godfrey	Tulane	6-3	290	Sr.
OL	Gregory Brown	Houston	6-1	305	Sr.
OL	Mark Grivna	Louisville	6-10	335	Sr.
OL	Mark Prehar	Army	6-2	266	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
DL	Adalius Thomas	Southern Miss	6-4	252	Sr.
DL	Mike Gantous	Louisville	6-2	285	Sr.
DL	Norris McCleary	East Carolina	6-4	295	Sr.
DL	Scott Kozak	Army	6-2	270	Sr.
LB	Ty Trahan	Southern Miss	6-1	225	Sr.
LB	Jeff Kerr	East Carolina	6-4	235	Sr.
LB	Bud Herring	Louisville	6-3	220	Jr.
DB	Kenny Dale Rowland	Army	6-3	200	Sr.
DB	Antonio Roundtree	Louisville	5-7	185	Jr.
DB	Mike James	Houston	6-0	212	Sr.
DB	Tinker Keck	Cincinnati	6-1	195	Sr.

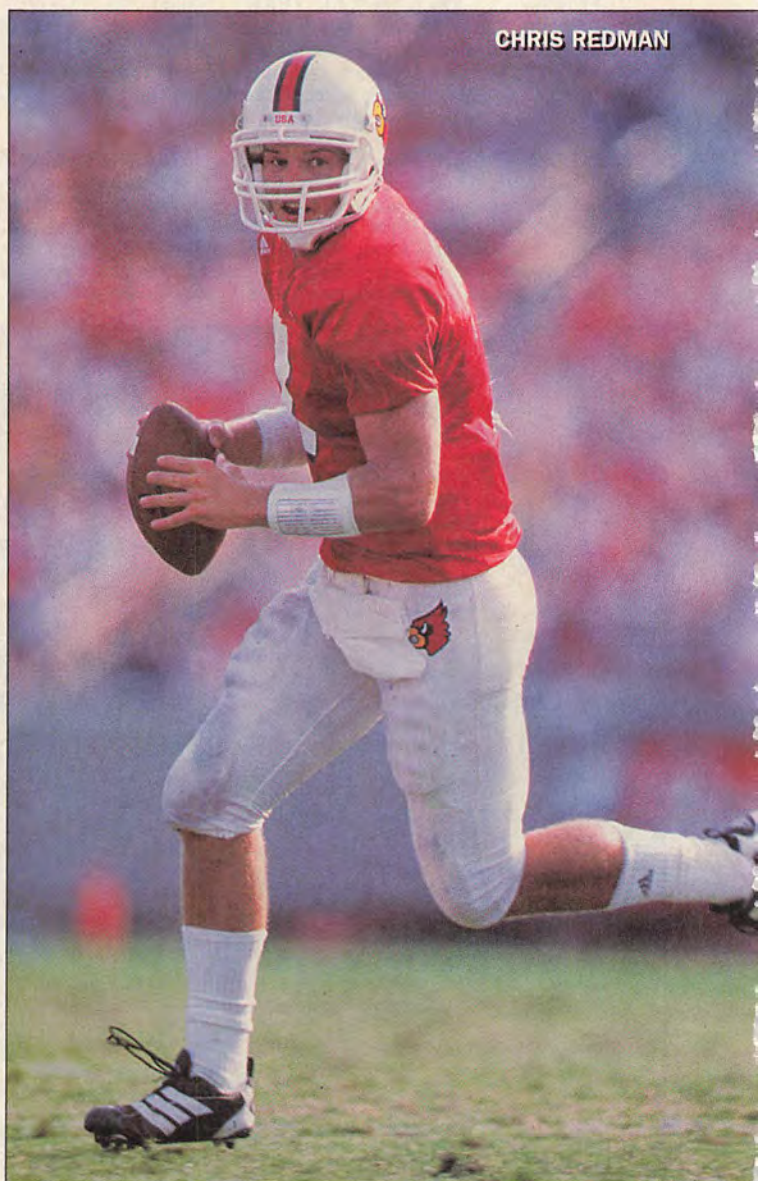
SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER	SCHOOL	HT	WT	CL
K	Ryan White	Memphis	5-10	183	So.
P	Graham White	Army	5-10	179	Sr.
KR	Rod Richardson	Army	5-8	171	Sr.

PROJECTED FINISH

	OVERALL
1. Southern Mississippi	8-3
2. Louisville	8-3
3. Tulane	7-4
4. Army	6-5
5. East Carolina	5-6
6. Houston	5-6
7. Memphis	4-7
8. Cincinnati	4-7
9. Alabama-Birmingham	3-8

CHRIS REDMAN



ANDY LYONS/ALLSPORT

SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

GOLDEN EAGLES

Two straight bowl trips will have the Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles fired up for the 1999 season. It won't have Golden Eagles coach Jeff Bower overconfident, though. Bower, in his ninth season at Southern Miss, knows there are plenty of departed players who need to be replaced.

Bower spent the offseason preaching the basics to his players.

"We want to be a better fundamental football team," Bower said. "We want to improve in blocking, tackling, and the rest of the fundamentals. We have a lot of younger kids and those are the kind of things that make good football teams."

Southern Miss lost six offensive starters from the '98 team, including starting quarterback Lee Roberts, four starters on the offensive line and tight end Antonio Franklin, who was used primarily as a blocker in the one-back, multiple offense. That bunch played a key role in the Golden Eagles' last two seasons, which were capped with a 41-7 victory over Pittsburgh in the '97 Liberty Bowl and a 42-35 loss to Idaho in the '98 Humanitarian Bowl.

While the offense took a heavy hit in losses, the defense stayed pretty much intact. Eight starters return to the defense, led by 6-4, 252-pound defensive end Adalius Thomas, who earned several All-American honors last season. It's clear that Bower has the program headed in the right direction. Now, his focus is keeping it headed that way.

Offense Replacing departed quarterback Lee Roberts will be one of the biggest tasks for Bower and his staff, but finding a quality group of linemen runs a close second.

Who will take over for Roberts, a starter for 30 consecutive games? Good question. Sophomore Jeff Kelly was Roberts' backup last season, but he figures to remain the No. 2 man again in 1999. That's because promising JUCO transfer Cable Davis will be handed the keys to the Southern Miss offense. Davis passed for 4,800 yards and 47 TDs in his two years at Butte (California) Community College.

It'll take offensive coordinator Larry Kueck a little time to help make Southern Miss' new triggerman Cable ready, but one spot that won't need much polish is receiver, where Sherrod Gideon and Todd Pinkston make up the top receiving duo in school history. They combined for 118 catches, 2,034 receiving yards and 20 touchdowns last season. Gideon, a 6-foot senior, holds school records for catches (153), receiving yards (2,694), and touchdown catches (23).

Last season, the Golden Eagles were third in the conference in passing offense, averaging 251 yards per game. If Bower can find a quarterback to get the football to Gideon and Pinkston again, they should again be near the top of the league in passing in '99. Depth at receiver could be a problem, though, with Gideon and Pinkston by far the most experienced players.

Bower will focus on the offensive line in the preseason and replacing four starters and tight end Antonio Franklin. Shederick Blackmon, a senior guard and three-year starter, is the only returning starter on the line. Vying for starting jobs on the line will be senior Brian Bell, junior college transfers Billy Clay and Dennis Evans, sophomores Tre' Chambers and Ernie Moore and five redshirt freshmen.

Still, Bower is confident he can put a solid line in place. "In all honesty, I think that we are going to be a little more athletic up there," he said. "Obviously, the experience isn't there. We are going to be young and we are going to be inexperienced at those positions. There are a number of guys who need to step up and establish themselves."

If Bower can shore up the line, he's got some runners who will find the holes. Sophomore Derrick Nix returns after he posted the 19th best rushing season in NCAA history for a freshman. Joining Nix will be sophomore

Dawayne Woods, who started three games and played in all 11 last season. His 426 yards ranked fourth in the program's history for a freshman. Senior Brandon Francis also returns. Moved from receiver to running back before the season, Francis started the first two games, but missed the last three games and had arthroscopic surgery last November.

Defense Adalius Thomas, a senior All-American caliber defensive end, leads a solid group of returning starters on the Southern Miss defense, perhaps the best defense in Conference USA last season.

The top eight down linemen all return, along with Thomas and two other starting linebackers, Ty Trahan and T.J. Slaughter, each a senior.

"We have a good situation (defensively)," Bower said, "but there are some things that we have to do better. We have to play the run better (second in C-USA in rushing defense, 162.5 ypg) than what we did last year. I think we have to play with more consistency and play harder."

Sophomore Roy Magee will replace Brian Bell at the third linebacker spot. There isn't much depth at linebacker, however, with Royal Bell, Slaughter's backup, the only player with much game experience. Bower hopes several others will push for playing time and be valuable backups, including Zaid Houston, Anthony Chapman, Derek Delmarter, Chris Vaughn, and Chris Langston.

"We want guys to step up and compete for a starting job and become guys that we wouldn't be afraid to put into a ball game," Bower said. "They have to develop. This is a group that has talent and the front seven should be the strength of our defense."

If there is a potential weakness in the defense, it's the secondary. Two starters are gone, along with versatile defensive back Larry Watts. Leo Barnes returns at strong safety and Terrance Parrish is back at cornerback, but the two other starting jobs in the secondary are up for grabs. Look for Raymond Walls, who moved from receiver to cornerback before spring practices, to snag one of those starting jobs. Two other potential starters are Corey Yates and Keon Moore, while Joey Pinkston could start at free safety. A junior college transfer, Dameron McCray, could also work his way into a starting job.

Special Teams Bower must find a replacement for placekicker Tim Hardaway, and a guy who worked closely with Hardaway may be just the man. Sophomore Brant Hanna, who handled the kickoff duties last season, is a prime candidate for the job, along with four freshmen. Jamie Purser returns for his senior season as the Eagles' punter after averaging 41.3 yards on 51 punts last season.

New One to Know Last season, Cable Davis was redshirted, and he spent the season watching quarterback Lee Roberts run the show. Now, Davis would like nothing better than to take over Roberts' show. Davis came to Southern Miss with some big numbers from Butte (Cal.) Community College, where he threw for 4,800 yards and 47 touchdowns in two seasons and was the team's MVP for two years.

Schedule Southern Miss will quickly find out what kind of team it has this season when it opens the '98 season at home against Tulane, which was unbeaten last season. From there, the Golden Eagles should win a non-conference game against Northwestern (La.) State, but they face a tough task the next two weeks in road games at Nebraska and Texas A&M. They could come away with a split in their other non-conference games at Alabama and at home against Southwestern Louisiana.

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-3

Conference USA

LOCATION: Hattiesburg, MS
ENROLLMENT: 14,000
STADIUM: M.M. Roberts Stadium (33,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 7-5
COACH: Jeff Bower
CAREER: 50-40-1; **HERE:** 50-40-1
BOWL: Lost Humanitarian (42-35 to Idaho)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 41

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Jeff Kelly	6-2	204	So.
RB	Derrick Nix*	6-1	223	So.
WR	Sherrod Gideon*	6-0	176	Sr.
WR	Todd Pinkston*	6-2	168	Sr.
FL	Dannye Fowler	5-11	175	So.
TE	Orlando Dantzler	6-4	255	So.
LT	Ernie Moore	6-6	258	So.
LG	Shederick Blackmon*	6-6	324	Sr.
C	Zeb Landers	6-3	265	Fr.
RG	Tre' Chambers	6-4	284	So.
RT	Billy Clay	6-4	270	Jr.
K	Brant Hanna	6-2	202	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Cedric Scott*	6-5	255	Jr.
DT	DeQuincy Scott*	6-2	270	Jr.
DT	John Nix*	6-2	278	Jr.
DE	Adalius Thomas*	6-4	252	Sr.
LB	Ty Trahan*	6-1	225	Sr.
LB	T.J. Slaughter*	6-2	238	Sr.
LB	Roy Magee	6-2	212	So.
CB	Raymond Walls	5-10	176	Jr.
CB	Terrance Parrish*	6-0	182	Jr.
FS	Joey Pinkston	6-0	177	Jr.
SS	Leo Barnes*	6-0	182	Jr.
P	Jamie Purser	6-0	192	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Derrick Nix	1,180	5.2	9	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Jeff Kelly	39	50.0	0	0
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Sherrod Gideon	66	1,186	17.9	13
Todd Pinkston	52	848	16.3	7
KICKING				
None				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Adalius Thomas	70	20 TFL		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 6	Tulane	L, 7-21
Sept. 11	Northwestern (La.) State	—
Sept. 18	at Nebraska	—
Sept. 25	at Texas A&M	L, 6-24
Oct. 9	at East Carolina	W, 41-7
Oct. 16	Army	W, 37-13
Oct. 23	Cincinnati	—
Oct. 30	at Alabama	—
Nov. 6	at Memphis	W, 45-3
Nov. 13	Southwestern Louisiana	W, 55-0
Nov. 20	at Louisville	W, 55-21

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	397.9	4th
Total defense	335.5	1st
Scoring offense	31.7	3rd
Scoring defense	17.8	1st

(Rank is Conference USA ranking)

Conference USA

LOCATION: Louisville, KY
ENROLLMENT: 22,000
STADIUM: Papa John's Cardinal Stadium (42,000)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf (Sportgrass)
1998 RECORD: 7-5
COACH: John L. Smith
CAREER: 76-44; **HERE:** 7-5
BOWL: Lost Motor City (48-29 to Marshall)
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 43

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Chris Redman*	6-3	225	Sr.
RB	Frank Moreau	6-1	225	Sr.
WR	Arnold Jackson*	5-8	160	Sr.
WR	Charles Sheffield*	6-1	195	Sr.
WR	Lavell Boyd*	6-3	205	Sr.
TE	Ibn Green*	6-2	225	Sr.
LT	Anthony Byrd*	6-5	290	Sr.
LG	Aaron Dardzinski	6-0	260	Fr.
C	Jason Padgett	6-4	295	Jr.
RG	Joe O'Shaughnessy*	6-1	285	Jr.
RT	Mark Grivna*	6-10	335	Sr.
K	Jon Hilbert	6-2	220	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Matt Sexton*	6-2	250	Jr.
DT	Derrick Kennedy*	6-3	270	Sr.
DT	Mike Gantous*	6-2	285	Sr.
DE	Otis Floyd*	6-1	220	Sr.
LB	Rashad Harris*	6-2	230	Jr.
LB	Bud Herring*	6-3	220	Jr.
LB	Xavier Burrell*	6-2	218	Jr.
CB	Antonio Roundtree*	5-7	185	Jr.
CB	Rashad Holman*	5-11	190	Jr.
FS	Courtney Dinkins*	6-0	205	Sr.
SS	Corey Wallace	5-11	200	Jr.
P	Chris Sivori	6-0	182	Fr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD	
Frank Moreau		307	7.1	3	
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Chris Redman		4,042	63.4	29	15
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Arnold Jackson		90	1,165	12.9	10
Lavell Boyd		61	804	13.2	1
Ibn Green		55	884	16.1	12
Charles Sheffield		50	697	13.9	4
KICKING					
Jon Hilbert, 5 of 8 FGs (long 40), 50 for 53 PATs					
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC		
Bud Herring		135	—		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Kentucky	L, 68-34
Sept. 11	UT-Chattanooga	—
Sept. 18	Illinois	W, 35-9
Sept. 25	Oklahoma	—
Oct. 2	Eastern Michigan	—
Oct. 7	at Army	W, 35-23
Oct. 16	at Memphis	W, 35-32
Oct. 23	Houston	—
Oct. 30	Alabama-Birmingham	—
Nov. 6	at Cincinnati	W, 62-19
Nov. 20	Southern Miss	L, 56-21

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	559.6	1st
Total defense	480.6	7th
Scoring offense	40.4	2nd
Scoring defense	35.2	7th

*Rank is Conference USA ranking

LOUISVILLE CARDINALS

Entering the 1998 season, the Cardinals were wondering what it would take to win football games. They had a new coach, John L. Smith. They were coming off a 1-10 season in '97. They had little self-confidence, not much pride.

All that changed as the '98 season unfolded. After losing their first two games to Kentucky and Utah, the Cardinals beat Illinois, Boston College and Cincinnati. Then, they lost to the top two teams in Conference USA (Southern Miss and Tulane) to fall to 3-4. A four-game winning streak to end the regular season landed Louisville a spot to the Motor City Bowl, where they lost to Marshall, 48-29. Still, that season-ending loss didn't drop the Cardinals' spirits. On the contrary, they had a change of heart and soul.

Louisville's turnaround from 1-10 in '97 to 7-5 in '98 marked the best turnaround for a first-year Division I coach in more than 30 years. It should come as no surprise that Smith orchestrated such a turnaround. He coached at Utah State the three previous seasons before taking the Louisville job. At Utah State, he twice had winning seasons and won the Big West Conference title in '97. Before Utah State, Smith spent six years at Idaho and built the Vandals into an annual contender in the Division I-AA ranks during his tenure. They reached the I-AA national championship game in '93. They were ranked No.13 or higher in five of his six years there.

Offense Senior quarterback Chris Redman has an icon on the school's website, will have a poster mailed out to influential media as well as color postcards mailed to Hesiman voters reminding them to tune into U of L's nationally televised Thursday night game vs. Army.

Redman (4,042 yards passing, 29 TDs in 1998) certainly deserves to be hyped for college football's most coveted award. Draft guru Mel Kiper Jr. calls him one of the top three seniors in the Class of 2000, which means that he has a chance at being the second straight quarterback from the Commonwealth (following Kentucky's Tim Couch) to be selected No. 1 overall in the NFL draft.

With Redman leading the way, Louisville had the most prolific offense in Conference USA, leading the league in total offense (559.6 yards per game) and passing offense (408.9).

Senior Frank Moreau has the best shot at filling Collins' spot in the one-back offense. Moreau was expected to play a greater role last year, but as Collins piled up the yardage, Moreau was lost in the shuffle. Redshirt freshman Henry Miller will push Moreau for the job, and sophomore Tony Stallings has moved from linebacker to running back. Stallings was an all-state running back in high school in Ohio. JUCO All-American Eric Lockhart from Dixie (Utah) College will also push for playing time, if not the starting job.

The Cards are loaded at wide receiver. Senior Arnold Jackson leads the way after setting single-season school records for catches (90) and receiving yards (1,165) in '98. His 90 catches was fourth-best for a Division I-A receiver in 1998 and the most by a returning receiver.

Seniors Charles Sheffield and Lavell Boyd won't allow opponents to focus all their attention on Jackson. Zek Parker, a junior, is former Junior Olympic hurdler who caught 23 passes for 429 yards last year, leading the team in yardage per catch (18.7). Boyd caught 61 passes last season, while Sheffield caught 50. Anthony Branch, a junior college All-American at Jones County (Miss.) College last season, gives Redman yet another good-hands person.

Louisville also has one of the nation's top tight ends in Ibn Green. Last season, Green led the nation's tight ends in catches (55), receiving yards (884) and touchdowns (12). He had 15 catches for 214 yards in a victory over East

Carolina as the Cardinals clinched a winning season.

Two starters are gone from the offensive line, where Smith expects depth to be a factor. The biggest hole was left by departed center P.J. Zariczny. Jason Padgett, a transfer from Phoenix Junior College, could fill the center spot. Joe O'Shaughnessy, who started half of last season, should start at one guard spot and redshirt freshman Aaron Dardzinski or senior Josh Richardson is the likely starter at the other guard. Both starting tackles, Anthony Byrd and Mark Grivna, return.

Defense One of the Cardinals' top defenders is senior tackle Mike Gantous, a second-team all-conference player last season. Another senior, Derrick Kennedy, returns for his fourth season at tackle. Two JUCO transfers, Donovan Arp and Kevin Kos, will also battle for jobs in the four-man rotation at tackle. Kos was a junior-college All-American at Moorpark (Calif.) College last year.

Otis Floyd, granted a fifth year of eligibility, started at four different positions last season before settling at defensive end, where he will likely start this year. Matt Sexton, a junior, also returns as a starting defensive end. Redshirt freshmen Michael Josiah and Devon Thomas give the Cardinals two more solid players at end, despite their lack of game experience.

Junior linebackers Rashad Harris and Bud Herring, who combined for more than 250 tackles as sophomores, return in their bid to retain their starting jobs. Each made the all-conference freshman team, and Herring was chosen to the all-conference second team last season. Xavier Burrell, a junior who started at safety a year ago, has beefed up and could play linebacker.

Two JUCO transfers, Mike White and Corey Wallace, are expected to be impact players in the secondary. White should vie for a starting job at cornerback with returning starter Rashad Holman and senior Don Bibb. The other corner is set with all-conference player Antonio Roundtree back in the fold. Roundtree led the league in pass breakups (15) last season and had 59 tackles.

Wallace, a junior college All-American at Jones County (Miss.) College last season, could start at strong safety. Senior Courtney Dinkins leads the race for the job as the starting free safety, a job he held last season when he had 77 tackles. Dinkins had six tackles for losses last season.

Special Teams Placekicker Jon Hilbert, sidelined with knee injuries in his first two seasons at Louisville, successfully petitioned for a sixth year of eligibility and looks to retain his starting job. Hilbert made a school-record 50 of 53 PATs last season and was 5 of 8 on field goal attempts. He didn't miss a field goal from inside 40 yards. At the punting spot, Chris Sivori is the man.

New One to Know Eric Lockhart entered the '98 season as the preseason JUCO Player of the Year in one publication, but went down with a knee injury three games into the season. Now he's back and ready to make a big impact with Louisville. The Cardinals hope Lockhart is the next Leroy Collins, who would have been a senior starter but instead departed for the NFL.

Schedule For the first time in 50 years, Louisville will enjoy the home-field advantage on seven Saturdays this season. After opening the year on the road against in-state rival Kentucky, the Cardinals play their next four games at home, starting with Division I-AA UT-Chattanooga. The Cardinals then play Illinois, Oklahoma and Eastern Michigan in non-conference games at home. Louisville opens its Conference USA schedule with a Thursday night road game at Army.

PROJECTED RECORD: 8-3

TULANE

GREEN WAVE

Tulane will begin the '99 season with a new coach (Chris Scelfo) and a new identity. Going 12-0 can do that to a team that was once considered a patsy.

"The expectation level at Tulane has been raised," said Scelfo, who replaces the wildly successful Tommy Bowden. "Something our players have to realize is that every time we play there are a lot of people counting on us to win the game. We're no longer the homecoming game."

In other words, the Green Wave will be wearing targets on their jerseys. It capped an undefeated regular season with a 41-27 victory over Brigham Young in the Liberty Bowl. Bowden then departed for Clemson, making way for Scelfo's first head coaching job.

Scelfo came to Tulane from Georgia, where he was assistant head coach and offensive line coach for three seasons. Prior to the Georgia job, Scelfo spent six seasons at Marshall, the last three as its offensive coordinator and line coach. He also coached two years at Oklahoma and two years at Northeast Louisiana, where he was a team captain as a senior.

Now that the Green Wave is on a roll, Scelfo plans to keep it going. Last season, it finished the season ranked seventh nationally. Scelfo has even bigger plans for the team.

"Our short-term and long-term goals are going to include the conference championship," he said. "With the increasing strength of our schedule over time, I believe we'll be able to compete for a national championship."

And that's a big change from the days when the Green Wave was everybody's homecoming game.

Offense Eight starters return to the Green Wave offense, but there is one big hole to fill. Senior quarterback Shaun King, chosen to the All-Conference USA first team, was a senior last season. King, a mobile playmaker, is currently holding a clipboard as he learns the NFL ropes with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, who selected him in the second round of last spring's NFL draft.

In the running for King's vacated job are sophomore Patrick Ramsey and redshirt freshman Derrick Joseph. Each has a shot at the starting job. Last season, Ramsey played sparingly as the third-string quarterback, completing 3 of 5 passes for 27 yards and a touchdown. He played in three games. Joseph, meanwhile, suffered a back injury early in the season and received a medical redshirt. He started the first two games at wide receiver and has now moved to quarterback.

Whoever starts at quarterback will have a good target in senior wide receiver Jajuan Dawson, a second-team All-Conference USA player in '98. Dawson was the team's second-leading receiver last season with 68 catches for 947 yards. He led the team in touchdowns with 12. Starting tight end Mike Turner also returns but is used primarily as a blocker in the multiple-set offense.

The offensive line returns almost intact, led by all-conference tackle Bernard Robertson and second-team all-conference guard Jerry Godfrey. Other starters returning on the line are tackle Corey Sewell and center Kapua Conley.

Charles Caldwell, an offensive tackle, was ineligible last season but has his grades in order this time around. Caldwell is slotted as a starter and should take over for the only departed lineman, guard Mike Gumiel.

Tailback Toney Converse and fullback O'Kie Woods give the Green Wave an experienced backfield. Converse led the team in rushing last year (871 yards), averaging 5.7 yards, and scored seven touchdowns. Woods was used primarily as a blocker with only seven carries for 15 yards.

Defense While the offense seems in pretty good shape, Scelfo and defensive coordinator Pete McGinnis have their work cut out rebuilding the Green Wave defense, which lost eight starters. Tulane does have two starters back from the front seven in middle linebacker Jerry Phillips and outside linebacker Sedric Clemons. They will anchor a young but talented front seven that Scelfo believes can do the job.

Potential starters are Brent Hamilton and Ryan Brewer at defensive ends and Mitch Mouton and Roxie Shelvin at tackles. Kevin Dukes is slotted as the second outside linebacker. Sam Knight returns as the free safety after leading the Green Wave secondary in tackles last season with 68, but he missed the last two games of the regular season with a sprained knee. Knight will have to beat out sophomore Meldon Barnes for the job, and that might not be easy. Corey Jones, who started the last four games at strong safety, is back and should retain that job. He was chosen to the conference's all-freshman team.

On the corners will be Tim Carter, who played in all 12 games and was the top backup in the secondary, and Allen Phillips, who suffered a broken leg in the fourth game. Phillips played in each of the first four games.

McGinnis plans to have an aggressive defense with plenty of blitzing. "Not only do we want to do some aggressive things to get some sacks, but we want to do some things that creates opportunities for us to create turnovers," McGinnis said.

Special Teams Special teams is a big question as the Green Wave enters the '99 season. Gone are starting placekicker Brad Palazzo, punter Brad Hill and deep snapper Dennis O'Sullivan. Casey Roussel, a sophomore, is slated as the starting kicker and punter, but is unproven in game situations. He had no field-goal attempts or punts last season.

New One to Know Roxie Shelvin, a 6-2, 263-pound defensive tackle from Franklin, La., could be an impact player. Redshirted last season, Shelvin earned second-team all-state honors at Franklin High School, where he was also a state champion wrestler. As a senior in '97, Shelvin had 87 tackles, eight sacks and 17 tackles for losses. He will take the spot of one of two departed starters, Dennis O'Sullivan and Phil Henderson.

Schedule Scelfo vows to upgrade the schedule in the future and he's done just that this year. Tulane has added a couple of tough nuts to the schedule this year, and both are on the road—at Syracuse and at Ole Miss. Add to that SMU and Navy, two teams the Wave beat last year, and the Green Wave has some tough challenges out of conference. Of course, Tulane will be tested right off the bat when it opens the season at Southern Miss, picked by many as the top team in the league.

PROJECTED RECORD: 7-4

LOCATION: New Orleans, LA

ENROLLMENT: 11,300

STADIUM: Superdome (70,892)

SURFACE: Artificial Turf

1998 RECORD: 12-0

COACH: Chris Scelfo

CAREER: 1-0; **HERE:** 1-0

BOWL: Won Liberty Bowl (41-27 over Brigham Young)

LETTERMEN RETURNING: 42

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Patrick Ramsey	6-3	225	So.
RB	Toney Converse*	5-8	168	Jr.
FB	O'Kie Woods*	5-11	235	Sr.
WR	Jajuan Dawson*	6-1	201	Sr.
WR	Kerwin Cook	6-0	174	Jr.
TE	Mike Turner*	6-2	246	Sr.
LT	Bernard Robertson*	6-4	285	Jr.
LG	Jerry Godfrey*	6-3	290	Sr.
C	Kapua Conley*	6-2	290	Sr.
RG	Corey Sewell*	6-2	260	So.
RT	Charles Caldwell	6-3	285	So.
K	Casey Roussel	6-0	223	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Brent Hamilton	6-4	230	Jr.
DT	Mitch Mouton	6-4	265	Jr.
DT	Roxie Shelvin	6-2	263	Fr.
DE	Ryan Brewer	6-4	248	So.
LB	Sedric Clemons*	5-10	218	Sr.
LB	Jerry Phillips*	5-11	232	Jr.
LB	Kevin Dukes	5-11	204	Sr.
CB	Tim Carter	6-0	183	Jr.
CB	Allen Phillips	5-11	188	Jr.
FS	Meldon Barnes	5-11	190	So.
SS	Corey Jones	5-11	198	Jr.
P	Casey Roussel	6-0	223	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Toney Converse		871	5.7	7
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD
Jeff Curtis		85	75.0	0
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG
Jajuan Dawson		68	947	13.9
KICKING				
None				
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC	
Jerry Phillips		104	Led team	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Southern Miss	W, 21-7
Sept. 11	SMU	W, 31-21
Sept. 18	Army	W, 49-35
Oct. 2	at Syracuse	—
Oct. 9	at Mississippi	—
Oct. 16	Southwestern Louisiana	W, 72-20
Oct. 23	at East Carolina	—
Oct. 30	Memphis	W, 41-31
Nov. 6	at Houston	W, 48-20
Nov. 13	at Navy	W, 42-24
Nov. 20	Alabama-Birmingham	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	508.6	2nd
Total defense	430.3	5th
Scoring offense	45.4	1st
Scoring defense	24.4	2nd

(Rank is Conference USA ranking)

Conference USA

LOCATION: West Point, NY
ENROLLMENT: 4,000
STADIUM: Michie Stadium (39,929)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Bob Sutton
CAREER: 41-47; **HERE:** 41-47
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 36

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Joe Gerena	6-0	208	Jr.
FB	Michael Wallace	5-11	232	Jr.
HB	John Johnson*	5-9	196	Sr.
HB	Reno Ferri	5-9	211	Sr.
WR	Grady Jett*	5-11	183	Sr.
TE	Shaun Castillo	6-1	231	Sr.
LT	Mike Larkin	6-4	258	Jr.
LG	Josh Gonzalez	6-1	291	Jr.
C	Brandon Calhoun	6-1	236	Jr.
RG	Mark Prehar*	6-2	266	Sr.
RT	Randy Overstreet	6-2	292	Sr.
K	Matt Parker	6-0	172	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Zach Hurst	6-3	239	Jr.
DT	David Hageman*	6-2	252	Sr.
NG	Scott Kozak*	6-2	270	Sr.
DE	Ron Sporer*	6-1	242	Jr.
LB	Lyle Weaver*	5-11	229	Jr.
LB	Nate Hunterman	6-0	222	Sr.
LB	Adisa King*	6-3	218	Sr.
CB	Brent Dial	6-0	183	So.
CB	Tony Coaxum*	5-10	180	Sr.
SS	Derick McNally*	6-2	193	Jr.
FS	Clay Daniels	5-11	197	Sr.
P	Graham White*	5-10	179	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				YDS	AVG	TD
Joe Gerena				267	3.2	4
Michael Wallace				224	4.6	2
PASSING				YDS	PCT	TD
Joe Gerena				363	47.6	3
RECEIVING				REC	YDS	AVG
Grady Jett				14	180	12.8
KICKING				TD	YDS	AVG
None						
DEFENSE				TKLS	MISC	
Lyle Weaver				118	15 TFL, 4 sacks	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 11	Wake Forest	—
Sept. 18	at Tulane	L, 35-49
Sept. 25	Ball State	—
Oct. 2	East Carolina	L, 25-30
Oct. 7	Louisville	L, 23-35
Oct. 16	at Southern Miss	L, 13-37
Oct. 23	New Mexico State	—
Nov. 6	at Air Force	L, 7-35
Nov. 13	at Memphis	—
Nov. 20	Houston	L, 28-38
Dec. 4	at Navy	W, 34-30

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	369.3	6th
Total defense	417.5	4th
Scoring offense	23.4	6th
Scoring defense	29.5	5th

(Rank is Conference USA ranking)

ARMY CADETS

"We learned a lot a year ago," Army coach Bob Sutton said. "We learned that taking that last step is very difficult. It takes so much effort to get into position to be successful and then you still may be a few plays away. Taking that last step is a real challenge."

Picked by many to finish last in Conference USA, the Cadets tied for fifth, going 2-4 in their first season in the league. It could have been much better. That last step was painful.

Army lost three games by a total of nine points and five games by a total of 33 points. It lost to Notre Dame by three. It lost to East Carolina by three. It lost to Miami of Ohio by one. After losing to Louisville, 35-23, Army finished the season with a 34-30 victory over rival Navy. Six of the eight losses were by two touchdowns or less, and three were decided in the last minute.

With Sutton in charge, the Cadets might be able to take that next step in '99. After all, Sutton has a history of doing it. In 1995, Sutton coached the Cadets to a 5-5-1 record in a season very much like the '98 season. Four of the five losses in '95 were against bowl teams, and those games were decided by a combined 33 points. Six games were decided in the last minute. Four came down to the last play. In their next season, the Cadets went 10-2 and made an appearance in the Independence Bowl on New Year's Eve.

Offense Hit hard by graduation, Army's offense returns just three starters: split end Grady Jett, halfback John Johnson and guard Mark Prehar. That doesn't mean Sutton is down on his offense. On the contrary, Sutton has confidence in the unit.

Junior Joe Gerena takes over as the quarterback in the multiple option offense. It's not new to him. Last season, Gerena moved into a prominent role when two-year starter Johnny Goff went down with an ankle injury. Gerena finished fifth on the team in rushing with 267 yards and came off the bench and led the Cadets to a victory over Navy in the season finale.

At fullback, two steady veterans are gone with the graduation of Ty Amey and Craig Stucker, but Sutton feels he has the spot filled with junior Michael Wallace and sophomore Alton McCallum. Wallace, one of the team's fastest players, was the backup last season. He was seventh on the team in rushing with 224 yards, averaging 4.6 yards per carry.

Halfback Bobby Williams, who finished his career as the program's eighth-leading rusher, has departed, but Army returns three battle-tested backs to fill the void. Johnson, a senior, has breakaway ability and seems primed for a breakthrough season. Johnson started alongside Williams last season and was the team's sixth-leading rusher with 251 yards. Reno Ferri should assume Williams' spot at right halfback.

Adding depth to the backfield will be senior Vaughn Carpenter and sophomores Gary Bartels, Demetrius Ball, Lawrence Lewis, Chris Walker and Calvin Smith. Multi-purpose receiver Rod Richardson is gone, but Jett, a senior, returns after leading the team in catches (14) and yards per catch (16.4). Junior Gary Williams also returns after catching 11 passes last season.

Shaun Castillo, a senior tight end, started one game last season and played in all 11 games. It's his job this time around. Castillo is a solid blocker and a receiving threat. He was the top backup to Joe Benson last season. Army often employs a double tight end set, and sophomore Clint Dodson could be the second tight end.

One of Sutton's biggest concerns is on the offensive line. For the second straight year, four of the five starters are gone. Prehar, the senior right guard, is the only returning starter. He can play center or either guard spot and could play all three. Sophomore Dustin Plumadore, a

backup center last season, could play center or guard. Junior Brandon Calhoun could start at center after developing quickly during the past year. Senior Randy Overstreet and sophomore Paul Henderson will battle for the job at right tackle. Junior Mike Larkin could start at left tackle after moving from defensive tackle and nose guard. Junior Josh Gonzalez and senior Brian Demcher will vie for the job at left guard.

Defense Army's strength could be its defensive line. Nose guard Scott Kozak is an all-conference candidate. David Hageman, a starter in the last 17 games, has moved from end to tackle to bolster the line. Kozak split time between nose guard and tackle last season. Sophomore John Kelly and senior Brian Kavanagh are backups at tackle, while junior Randy Mitchell and sophomores Chris Curran and Domenic Spadaro are Kozak's backups.

The Cadets have experience at ends with Ron Sporer, Brian King and Zach Hurst returning. Sporer missed the spring with a shoulder injury, but was an impact player in '98. Hurst has speed an athleticism and will contend for a starting job in the revamped 4-3 defense. King has played seven different spots in the defensive front. Junior Matt Cole and sophomore Brandon Perdue are other likely candidates for playing time, but seniors Clint Holmes and Marcus Jackson could also figure into the mix.

The Cadets are deep, experienced and talented at linebacker. In the new defense, Sutton will have the luxury of putting veterans Adisa King, Nate Hunterman and Lyle Weaver on the field at the same time.

Weaver was one of the top defensive players in the league and led the Cadets in tackles (118), tackles for loss (15) and sacks (four). Key reserves at linebacker will be seniors Brandon Kelly and Tom Duggan.

In the secondary, Tony Coaxum and Derick McNally are two of the seven starters returning on defense. McNally, a converted cornerback, will start at strong safety. Coaxum will start at cornerback after leading the team in pass breakups with 10 last season.

Sutton must replace all-conference Kenny Dale Rowland at free safety. Clay Daniels and Brian Zeickfoose are the top candidates. Brent Dial and Andrew Burke lead the race to start at the other corner.

Special Teams Senior Matt Parker appears to be the likely replacement for starting placekicker Eric Olsen. Parker handled kickoff duties two years ago and has a strong, accurate leg. Punter Graham White returns after earning all-conference honors last season when he averaged a school-record 44.7 yards per punt and landed eight of his boots inside opponents' 20-yard line. Omari Thompson looks like the top return threat, but he must fill the void left by the departure of Rod Richardson.

New One to Know Alton McCallum, a sophomore fullback, may be a star in the making for the Cadets. Last season, McCallum was one of Army's top junior varsity players.

Schedule The Cadets make their second appearance in Conference USA this year. Last season, five of their opponents went to bowl games, including three from Conference USA. This year's nonconference schedule is much more win-friendly. It doesn't include Notre Dame, which beat the Cadets, 20-17, in '98. The Cadets open the season at home against Wake Forest. The teams last played in '94 when Wake Forest won, 33-27. Other non-conference games are at home against Ball State and New Mexico State and on the road against Air Force and Navy.

PROJECTED RECORD: 6-5

EAST CAROLINA

PIRATES

"Our schedule is really top-heavy," coach Steve Logan says. "You can't sit there and say we'll win any of our first four games. We'll compete as best we can."

Logan, in his eighth season at East Carolina, doesn't just want to compete in Conference USA. Last season, the Pirates went 6-5 and finished fourth in the league with a 3-3 record. Logan wants a better finish this year, but cracking into the top tier of the league standings won't be easy.

Logan hopes to maintain a defense that ranked third in Conference USA in total defense, allowing 375.3 yards per game, and third in scoring defense, allowing 27 points per game. The Pirates were fifth in the league in total offense, averaging 382.1 yards per game, and fourth in scoring offense, averaging 24.9 points per game.

It's a young team, but Logan says they've already been tested on the football field. "They're young, but they've played quite a bit," he said. "We don't have a bunch of seniors, but we've got a mix of sophomores and juniors who have played a lot of football."

Offense As the Pirates began preparing for the '98 season, one big concern was at quarterback. That's not a problem this year. Sophomore David Garrard, who split time with Bobby Weaver last year, has the job in his hands this time around, thanks to a strong finish in '98.

Garrard took over the job full time in '98 when Weaver suffered an knee injury Oct. 31 against Houston and missed the last three games. Garrard finished the season ranked No. 23 nationally in passing efficiency and second nationally among freshmen.

Garrard broke 16 school passing records last season, completing 157 of 255 passes for 2,091 yards. His 14 TD passes doubled his number of interceptions. Redshirt freshman Richard Alston will be Garrard's backup, while Weaver, one of the team's fastest players, will still be available.

The Pirates have six starters returning from the '98 offense and a good number of players with game experience. They are solid at running back. Junior Jamie Wilson is a top candidate to start at fullback and should battle sophomore Leonard Henry for the job. Juniors Marcellus Harris, Keith Stokes and Weaver give the Pirates plenty of options at halfback. Stokes is a highly-touted signee out of Georgia Military College.

At the receiver positions, three-year starter Troy Smith, the school's all-time leader in receiving yardage (1,982) and a sixth-round pick of the Philadelphia Eagles this past spring, will be missed, but senior Lamont Chappell will try to fill his shoes. Chappell has played in the shadow of Smith during his career and should be more of a factor this season. He caught 36 passes for 584 yards and led the team with six TD catches. He will start at flanker.

With Smith gone, sophomore Arnie Powell should start at split end. A former quarterback in high school, Powell caught 10 passes, one for a TD, as a redshirt freshman last season. Harris could move from halfback to a receiver position, if needed. Logan can look far down the bench for depth at receiver.

Two sophomores, Marcus Bryson and Corey Floyd, will battle for the tight end job. On the right side of the offensive line, the Eagles return starters Sherwin Lacewell at guard and Samein Jones at tackle. Each is a junior. Derrick Gamble, who started two games in '98, is a top candidate to start at left tackle. Aaron Walker should start at left guard. Anthony Nobles will move from guard, where he saw playing time last season, to start at center.

Defense Six starters return from the Pirates' 1998 defense, but there is one major concern. Only one down lineman, Norris McCleary, is back. That's one reason Logan is glad for a change in schemes from a year ago. Instead of a four-man front, the Pirates will employ a

three-man front with four linebackers (two inside linebackers, two defensive ends). Tim Rose, who spent the last two seasons as defensive coordinator at Boston College, takes over the same job for the Pirates and will install the new defense.

Look for the Pirates to play an attacking, aggressive defense. That's what Rose was known for at Boston College. Juniors Bernard Williams and Marc Yellock, the expected starters at defensive end, will likely be sent after quarterbacks with plenty of blitz packages. Yellock started seven games last season and had 35 tackles, while Williams played mostly special teams.

Perhaps the strongest spot on the defense is at inside linebacker where senior Jeff Kerr and Pernell Griffin give the Pirates one of the league's most formidable duo at their position. Griffin, starting every game as a redshirt freshman last year, was recognized as a freshman All-America candidate. Clenton Cochran started three games last year when Kerr was out, and Eric Reyes gives the Pirates another solid inside linebacker.

The defensive front was hardest hit by graduation, but the return of McCleary should help. McCleary, a senior defensive tackle, was granted another year in an NCAA ruling. He's started 22 games the last two seasons and had 57 tackles and 5.5 sacks in '98. Tomha McMillan started three games last season and is the likely starter at the other tackle position. Either Kwabena Green or Mbayo Ahmadu will start at nose guard.

Forrest Foster and Kevin Monroe, each a senior, return as starting cornerbacks, but the Pirates will have two new safeties. Chris Satterfield is a likely starter at strong safety. Travis Mazyck has moved from halfback and could start at free safety. Erik Hines, one of the team's fastest players, could be a factor at cornerback, while Charles Robinson, Antwaine Yelverton and Antwan Adams will see action at the safety spots.

Special Teams Bryce Harrington was signed to take over the placekicking duties, while Keith Stokes was signed as a return specialist. Marcellus Harris gives the Pirates another standout kick returner. Senior Andrew Bayes returns after being one of the nation's top punters last season, averaging 42.9 yards on 64 punts. Brantley Rivers could be the kickoff man, but was inconsistent on field-goal attempts and PATs last year, making 5 of 8 field goals and 9 of 14 PATs.

New One to Know Keith Stokes, a junior who transferred from Georgia Military College, will help the Pirates in any number of ways. Look for him to do everything: Return punts and kickoffs, catch passes, and play a little halfback. A native of Dothan, Ala., Stokes was a second-team JUCO All-American. He returned nine kicks for touchdowns last season, three on kickoffs and six on punts. He also caught 32 passes for 542 yards and six touchdowns in two years and gained 532 yards and scored five touchdowns as a tailback last year.

Schedule The Pirates play six home games, including a game against natural rival North Carolina State, the regular-season finale on Nov. 20. Duke and its new pass-happy "Airborne" offense will also be making its first visit to the Pirates' home field. Pirate fans can also look forward to a home game against preseason Big East favorite Miami (Fla.), but they'll have to hit the road for a nonconference game at Lou Holtz-led South Carolina. The season opens with a Sept. 4 game against West Virginia in Charlotte. That'll be a toughie too, because the Mountaineers feature one of the nation's most underrated quarterbacks in Marc Bulger.

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-6

LOCATION: Greenville, NC
ENROLLMENT: 17,479
STADIUM: Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium (43,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 6-5
COACH: Steve Logan
CAREER: 42-37; **HERE:** 42-37
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 45

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	David Garrard*	6-3	240	So.
FB	Jamie Wilson*	6-1	205	Jr.
HB	Marcellus Harris*	5-10	180	Jr.
WR	Lamont Chappell*	6-1	180	Sr.
WR	Arnie Powell	6-4	215	So.
TE	Marcus Bryson	6-4	240	So.
LT	Derrick Gamble*	6-4	285	Sr.
LG	Aaron Walker	6-3	285	So.
C	Anthony Nobles	6-6	325	Jr.
RG	Sherwin Lacewell*	6-2	290	Jr.
RT	Samein Jones*	6-3	290	Jr.
K	Andrew Bayes	6-3	200	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Bernard Williams	6-4	240	Jr.
DT	Tomha McMillan	6-3	255	Sr.
NG	Kwabena Green	6-1	255	Sr.
DT	Norris McCleary*	6-4	295	Sr.
DE	Marc Yellock*	6-4	230	Jr.
LB	Jeff Kerr*	6-4	235	Sr.
LB	Pernell Griffin*	6-3	240	So.
CB	Forrest Foster*	5-10	180	Sr.
CB	Kevin Monroe*	6-1	185	Sr.
FS	Travis Mazyck	6-2	185	So.
SS	Chris Satterfield	5-11	195	Jr.
P	Andrew Bayes*	6-3	200	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Jamie Wilson		647	4.7	4
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD
David Garrard		2,091	61.6	14
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG
Lamont Chappell		36	584	16.2
KICKING				
Andrew Bayes		6 of 11 FGs		
Brantley Rivers		5 of 8 FGs		
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC	
Jeff Kerr		115	Missed 3 games with injury	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	West Virginia*	—
Sept. 11	Duke	—
Sept. 18	at South Carolina	—
Sept. 25	Miami (Fla.)	—
Oct. 2	at Army	W, 30-25
Oct. 9	Southern Miss	L, 7-41
Oct. 23	Tulane	—
Oct. 30	at Houston	L, 31-34
Nov. 6	at Alabama-Birmingham	W, 26-7
Nov. 13	Cincinnati	W, 24-21
Nov. 20	North Carolina State	—

*at Charlotte, N.C.

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	382.1	5th
Total defense	375.3	3rd
Scoring offense	24.9	4th
Scoring defense	27.0	3rd

(Rank is Conference USA ranking)

Conference USA

LOCATION: Houston, TX
ENROLLMENT: 30,757
STADIUM: O'Quinn Field (23,000)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8
COACH: Kim Helton
CAREER: 17-49-1; **HERE:** 17-49-1
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 58

HOUSTON

COUGARS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
QB	Jason McKinley*	6-3	210	Jr.	
RB	Ketric Sanford*	5-8	204	Sr.	
FB	Tommie Baldwin	5-10	225	So.	
SE	Orlando Iglesias*	6-2	212	Jr.	
WR	Jerrian James*	6-0	180	Sr.	
TE	Scott Regimbald*	6-3	246	Sr.	
LT	Josh Lovelady*	6-3	320	Jr.	
LG	Gregory Brown*	6-1	305	Sr.	
C	Jeff Medford*	6-4	290	Sr.	
RG	Justin Stille*	6-4	304	Sr.	
RT	Jabari Beauford	6-4	300	So.	
K	Zack Waddell	5-10	174	Fr.	

DEFENSE					
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL	
DE	Grover Thompson	6-4	288	Jr.	
DT	Kevin Payne	6-4	295	So.	
DT	Adriano Belli*	6-5	278	Sr.	
DE	Ahmad Charles	6-0	240	Sr.	
LB	Wayne Rogers	6-1	233	Jr.	
LB	Jeremy Maxon*	6-3	232	Sr.	
SS	Micah Malone*	6-2	218	Sr.	
WS	Mike James*	6-0	212	Sr.	
FS	Kenny Hill*	5-8	192	Sr.	
CB	William Fields*	5-7	180	Sr.	
CB	Emile White*	6-0	217	Jr.	
P	Jeff Patterson	6-1	191	Jr.	

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
Ketric Sanford	1,054	4.7	6	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Jason McKinley	2,437	56.5	18	13
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jerrian James	80	931	11.6	5
Orlando Iglesias	66	772	12.2	8
KICKING				
None				
DEFENSE				
	TKLS	MISC		
Mike James	72	2 INTs		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Rice	—
Sept. 11	at Alabama	—
Sept. 18	SW Louisiana	—
Sept. 25	at UAB	—
Oct. 9	Cincinnati	L, 43-44
Oct. 16	at North Carolina	—
Oct. 23	at Louisville	—
Oct. 30	East Carolina	W, 34-31
Nov. 6	Tulane	L, 20-48
Nov. 13	at LSU	—
Nov. 20	at Army	L, 28-38

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Team offense	367.4	7th
Team defense	368.2	2nd
Scoring offense	23.1	7th
Scoring defense	22.8	4th

(Rank is Conference USA ranking)

Six years ago, Kim Helton was hired to get Houston's football program headed in the right direction, and in many ways, he has done just that.

Helton has his football players on track academically. His motto for the program is based on the three "Cs": Class, character and commitment. A former NFL line coach, Helton has the respect of the administration and his players. Now Helton needs to win some more football games.

"We've taken a bad program and made it a solid program," Helton says, "but we are a long way from being a consistent dominating team. The elements that build great programs have to do with number one, winning games. We think it's important to win games with good people who create good images and learn to be positive role models in society."

The nucleus of last year's 3-8 team returns this season. There are 58 lettermen back. Helton has brought in four new assistant coaches, including a new offensive and defensive coordinator, and installed a new defense. Dick Bumpas takes over as defensive coordinator after serving in the same capacity the last four years at Navy. He has 22 years of experience as a coach and will also coach the Cougars' defensive line.

Taking over as offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach will be Les Koenning, Jr., who had a similar job at Duke last year. Other new coaches are safeties coach Brad Peveto and cornerbacks coach Andrew Swasey. If hard work translates into winning games, Helton thinks his team can get it done this year. New coaching blood could help. So will the 13 seniors expected to start; six are on offense, seven on defense. Helton has proven he can do the job: In 1996, the Cougars won the Conference USA championship and made a trip to the Liberty Bowl.

"One thing you can say about the Cougars is we will compete," Helton said. "We will play hard until the final whistle. We may not have the most talented group of players, but we have players that have a lot of 'want to'."

Offense There is loads of experience returning to the Cougars' offense, especially at the skill positions. Back for more this year are their top three tailbacks, top three fullbacks, top two wide receivers, the top quarterback and the top tight end.

Senior Ketric Sanford will start at tailback and he has a solid backup in Mike Green. Last season, Sanford led the Cougars' rushing with 1,054 yards and six touchdowns, while Green was second with 435 yards and three TDs.

Jason McKinley returns after starting at quarterback the last two years. One of the top five passers in the program's history, McKinley has developed over the last two years as he learned the Cougars' intricate offense, but he still must develop the accuracy and consistency to match former all-stars in the program like Heisman Trophy winner Andre Ware and No. 1 draft choice David Klingler.

McKinley will have some big-time receivers at which to throw. Jerrian James and Orlando Iglesias are all-conference candidates. In his first year with the Cougars, James led the team with 80 catches and 931 receiving yards. Iglesias, a more physical receiver, led the team in touchdowns with eight and had 63 catches for 772 yards. Joining those two are Kendall Williams, one of the team's fastest players, and redshirt freshmen Brian Robinson and Jeremy McCardell. Williams missed most of the '98 season with a broken hand.

Sophomores Tommie Baldwin and Kairon Hill are expected to battle for the starting fullback job, but senior Brian Freeman is also in the mix. Their roles mostly are limited to blocking. Senior Scott Regimbald is projected as the probable starter at tight end. He was fourth on the team in catches last season with 21, and he was third in receiving yardage (223), touchdown catches (three), and yards per catch (20.3).

There is experience coming back on the offensive line as

well, led by guards Greg Brown and Justin Stille. Starting center Jeff Medford and starting tackle Josh Lovelady also return. Tackle Jabari Beauford is the only new lineman expected to start, but he saw playing time as a freshman last season. The line averages more than 300 pounds.

Some new formations will be seen in the already exciting offense, including a no-back offense, five-receiver set, and more shotgun formations.

Defense Bumpas has brought with him a new look on defense, a 4-2-5 alignment which features constant pressure on the quarterback and often as many as nine players in the box. Outside linebacker Micah Malone, perhaps the team's best defensive player, has moved to strong safety. The new set will have four defensive linemen, two cornerbacks, three safeties, and two linebackers.

Malone will be joined in the secondary with Mike James, the leading tackler from '98 and the weakside safety this year. Safeties and linebackers were particularly impressive during spring workouts.

Kenny Hill made the move from cornerback to free safety in the new alignment. Three hard-hitting linebackers will battle for the two spots: junior Wayne Rogers, senior Jeremy Maxon and sophomore Arthur Gissendanner. Two cornerbacks with starting experience also return in William Fields and Emile White.

Leading the front four is senior right tackle Adriano Belli, who started last season. Grover Thompson, a JUCO transfer, could be an impact player at left end. Sophomore Kevin Payne could start at left tackle, although Mike Derouselle started last year at that spot. Rufus Williams, a sophomore, gives the Cougars plenty of depth at left tackle. Senior Ahmad Charles is the leading candidate to start at right end.

Once again, Helton will look to avoid the injury bug. They were bitten hard last season. "If we go without any injuries, we may be pretty good," Helton says.

Special Teams Helton must find replacements for both his starting punter, Ivan Luna, and place-kicker, Mike Waddell, from the '98 season. He signed punter Jeff Patterson out of Blinn High School in Pflugerville, Texas. Patterson enrolled in January and had a solid spring practice. Zack Waddell, the younger brother of 1998 placekicker Mike Waddell, will battle '98 punter Joey Saavedra for the job in the preseason. The Cougars must also replace an outstanding kick returner, Mike Smith.

New One to Know Great things are expected of defensive end Grover Thompson, a transfer from North Dakota State College of Science. A 6-5, 280-pound junior, Thompson earned first team NJCAA All-America honors last season and was a finalist for NJCAA player-of-the-year honors. He started every game in two years at the junior college and was a team captain last year. Thompson has already had a chance to learn the Cougars' system, having enrolled in January and practiced with the team in the spring. He was a prep standout at Milwaukee Technical High School.

Schedule Houston's 1999 schedule isn't as daunting as last season's, but it's still tough enough. Last season, the Cougars played Rose Bowl-bound UCLA and eventual national champion Tennessee in back-to-back games, and then played unbeaten Tulane in the last game of the season. Houston will play SEC members LSU and Alabama and also face North Carolina, all on the road. In the conference, the Cougars trade bowl team for bowl team from '98: They play Louisville (which they didn't play last season) and don't play Southern Miss. Houston opens the season with a renewal of its neighborhood rival Rice.

PROJECTED RECORD: 5-6

MEMPHIS

TIGERS

Conference USA

LOCATION: Memphis, TN
ENROLLMENT: 19,851
STADIUM: Liberty Bowl (62,380)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 2-9
COACH: Rip Scherer
CAREER: 42-50; **HERE:** 13-31
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 46

Memphis coach Rip Scherer is tired of losing. Sick of it. Scherer, whose record in four years at Memphis is 13-31, vows to change the Tigers' losing ways.

"We will not continue to lose football games at the University of Memphis," Scherer says bluntly.

Thanks to a rugged nonconference schedule, Memphis won't have an easy time getting over the hump. Three of the five nonleague games are against Southeastern Conference teams: Mississippi, Mississippi State, and Tennessee.

The Tigers also play Arkansas State and Missouri in nonconference games.

Last season, the Tigers went 1-5 in Conference USA, 2-9 overall. They beat Cincinnati and Arkansas State and put up a fight before losing to some solid teams. Can the Tigers take the next step in '99? Perhaps.

"In the last two years, we've lost seven games by a touchdown or less," Scherer said. "With our schedule, we haven't ducked anybody. We've played as tough a schedule as anybody in our conference. That makes it hard for a program like ours to get to the next level."

For the first time in his Memphis career, Scherer has almost an entire team of players he recruited. He has confidence in his recruiting classes and believes they can get the job done.

"We're starting a lot of guys we recruited and we have some young players who are very talented," Scherer said. "We've recruited some very talented players. Now it's time for it to start paying off on the field."

With eight starters returning on offense and seven on defense, the Tigers could make an upward move this season. Don't look for them to skyrocket, though. Scherer was 29-19 in four seasons at Division I-AA James Madison, where he had three winning seasons and made a I-AA playoff appearance, but he's finding the tasks in Division I to be a bit more difficult.

If the Tigers can come close to a break-even season, their fans should be happy.

Offense One of the highlights for the Tigers in '98 was the rushing of tailbacks Gerard Arnold and Teofilo Riley, who combined for 1,544 yards and 12 touchdowns. They're back for more this year. So the Tigers will focus on rushing the football, right?

Nope. Scherer wants to give sophomore quarterback Neil Suber plenty of chances to throw the football and open up the field for Arnold and Riley.

Arnold, a senior, is the feature back in the Tigers' multiple option offense and is coming off a record-setting season. His 1,059 yards was a single-season record at Memphis. So was his six 100-yard games. Riley was no slouch, either, with three 100-yard games, including a 152-yard, two-touchdown game against Louisville. Jeremy Scruggs, another senior, returns as the starting fullback.

Suber, a sophomore, started the last three games at quarterback for the Tigers, replacing Kenton Evans in the 35-19 victory over Arkansas State.

Both are back to battle for the job again this year, and they will be challenged by junior Stephen Galbraith and redshirt freshman Travis Anglin. Anglin may be the best athlete, Suber the best thrower.

Three starters return on the offensive line: guards Tim Seymour and Artis Hicks and tackle David Sherrod. Also back is starting tight end Billy Kendall. "It's the most physical offensive line we've had so far," Scherer said.

Damien Dodson is back after leading the Tigers in receiving last year with 42 catches for 753 yards. He ranks fourth at Memphis in career receiving yardage

(1,589) and fourth in catches (108).

Still, while the Tigers had some individual highlights, their overall performance on offense was pretty dismal. They ranked last in the league in scoring (20.5), seventh in passing offense (186.8) and last in rushing offense (139.5).

Defense While the offense floundered at times, the Tigers' defense wasn't any better. Scherer will rely on a solid corps of linebackers again this year. Leading the way will be two returning starters at outside linebacker, DeMorrio Shank and Casper Stiles, and starting inside linebacker Kamal Shakir. Shakir led the Tigers in tackles with 87 and was chosen to the *Sporting News* Freshman All-America team and the Conference USA All-Freshman team last season. He had six tackles for losses. Starting defensive end Tramont Lawless is also back.

"All of our linebackers are solid, good players," Scherer said. "I think those guys have got to step up and play well."

Scherer feels just as good about his down linemen, led by tackle Calvin Lewis. Last season, the Tigers ranked fourth in the league in rushing defense (174.4), and Scherer hopes for an even better showing in that area this season.

Scherer hired John Thompson from Southern Miss to be the Tigers' defensive coordinator, and the players have responded well to their new coach.

"Our kids have really jumped on the bandwagon," Scherer said. "We've got some young guys who've got to step up. We've got a real solid front seven." Two starters are back in the secondary: free safety Idrees Bashir and cornerback Reginald Howard. They will try to plug the holes in a defense that ranked last in the conference in passing defense, allowing 280.9 yards per game.

Special Teams Placekicker Ryan White was nearly perfect in his redshirt freshman season in '98. He was 17 of 17 on field-goal attempts, 22 of 22 on point-after-touchdown kicks, and earned the Conference USA Special Teams Player of the Year award. He was the first kicker in Memphis history to make all of his field-goal attempts and PATs. Ben Graves and Jim Cande return after splitting the punting duties last season. Graves averaged 38.8 yards on 40 punts, Cande 41.6 yards on 50 punts.

New One to Know Andre Arnold is expected to move into a starting job at defensive left end, and he's a good one. Arnold, from Columbus (Ga.) John Shaw High School, lettered as a redshirt freshman in '98. His off-season work and a strong showing in the spring could make the loss of departed end Marquis Bowling and Manny Stantibanez a little easier to stomach.

Schedule Once again, the Tigers' nonconference schedule is tough. Their nonconference road games are at Mississippi State and Tennessee, and they play Mississippi, Missouri and Arkansas State at home. Then comes the Conference USA schedule.

"Four of the first five teams we played were in bowl games (Arkansas State wasn't) and seven overall were in bowl games," Scherer said. "We have our work cut out for us and we believe we have a team that's capable of competing with those teams. We expect to line up and compete. Being close is not our objective."

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Neil Suber*	6-1	228	So.
RB	Gerard Arnold*	5-8	194	Sr.
FB	Jeremy Scruggs*	5-11	222	Sr.
WR	Damien Dodson*	5-9	164	Sr.
WR	Al Sermon	6-4	185	Jr.
TE	Billy Kendall*	6-5	227	So.
LT	DeCorye Hampton	6-8	315	Jr.
LG	Artis Hicks*	6-4	281	So.
C	Jason Austin	6-4	298	So.
RG	Tim Seymour*	6-1	292	Sr.
RT	David Sherrod*	6-5	316	So.
K	Ryan White*	5-10	183	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Andre Arnold	6-3	225	So.
DT	Calvin Lewis*	6-3	272	Jr.
DT	Marcus Bell	6-2	295	Jr.
DE	Tramont Lawless*	6-3	239	Sr.
LB	Casper Stiles*	6-0	220	Sr.
LB	Kamal Shakir*	6-0	229	Jr.
LB	DeMorrio Shank*	5-11	228	Jr.
CB	Reginald Howard*	5-11	187	Sr.
CB	Michael Stone	6-0	182	Jr.
FS	Idrees Bashir*	6-2	192	So.
SS	Glenn Sumter	6-1	188	So.
P	Jim Cande*	6-1	185	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING		YDS	AVG	TD
Gerard Arnold		1,059	5.1	7
PASSING		YDS	PCT	TD INT
None				
RECEIVING		REC	YDS	AVG TD
Damien Dodson		42	753	17.9
KICKING		Ryan White, 17 of 17 FGs, 22 of 22 PATs		
DEFENSE		TKLS	MISC	
Kamal Shakir		87	6 TFL	

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Mississippi	L, 10-30
Sept. 11	at Mississippi State	L, 6-14
Sept. 18	Arkansas State	W
Sept. 25	at Tennessee	—
Oct. 2	Missouri	—
Oct. 9	at Alabama-Birmingham	—
Oct. 16	Louisville	L, 32-35
Oct. 30	at Tulane	L, 31-41
Nov. 6	Southern Mississippi	L, 3-45
Nov. 13	Army	—
Nov. 20	at Cincinnati	W, 41-23

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	326.3	8th
Total defense	430.3	6th
Scoring offense	20.5	8th
Scoring defense	30.9	6th

(Rank is Conference USA ranking)

Conference USA

LOCATION: Cincinnati, OH
ENROLLMENT: 35,000
STADIUM: Nippert Stadium (35,000)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 2-9
COACH: Rick Minter
CAREER: 24-31-1; **HERE:** 24-31-1
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 40

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Deontey Kenner*	6-2	202	Jr.
FB	Lloyd Garden	5-11	235	So.
TB	DeMarco McCleskey*	5-11	214	So.
WR	Jason Collins-Baker	5-11	190	Jr.
WR	Tim Walker	5-11	181	So.
TE	Ashley Hunt	6-5	242	Jr.
LT	Andy Weinheimer	6-4	298	So.
LG	Ted Forrest	6-3	313	So.
C	Doug Rosfeld*	6-4	281	Jr.
RG	Ken Biggs*	6-5	296	Sr.
RT	Kirk Doolin	6-4	314	So.
K	Joe Judge*	5-11	187	Sr.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Paul Stephens	6-6	246	So.
DT	Dante Elliott	6-3	251	So.
DT	Ben Piening	6-5	251	So.
DE	Joe Hamilton	6-2	244	So.
LB	Troy Evans	6-2	236	Jr.
LB	Eddie Johnson	5-11	233	Jr.
LB	DeJuan Gossett*	5-11	200	Jr.
CB	Jeff Burrow	5-8	176	Sr.
CB	Danny Adams	5-10	185	Ft.
FS	Tinker Keck*	6-1	195	Sr.
SS	Bobby Fuller	5-10	191	Sr.
P	Adam Wulfeck*	6-1	190	So.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
	YDS	AVG	TD	
DeMarco McCleskey	861	5.3	11	
PASSING				
	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
Deontey Kenner	2,047	54.8	6	13
RECEIVING				
	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Tony Smikle	19	253	13.3	

KICKING
 Joe Judge, 9 of 15 FGS (5 of 6 inside 40 yards)

DEFENSE		
	TKLS	MISC
DeJuan Gossett	78	—

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Kent	—
Sept. 18	Wisconsin	—
Sept. 25	at Ohio State	—
Oct. 2	Troy State	—
Oct. 9	at Houston	W, 44-43
Oct. 16	Alabama-Birmingham	—
Oct. 23	at Southern Miss	L, 17-24
Oct. 30	at Miami-Ohio	L, 0-41
Nov. 6	Louisville	L, 19-62
Nov. 13	at East Carolina	L, 21-24
Nov. 20	Memphis	L, 23-41

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	418.1	3rd
Total defense	484.4	8th
Scoring offense	23.5	5th
Scoring defense	41.5	8th

(Rank is Conference USA ranking)

CINCINNATI

BEARCATS

After a losing season in '94, Rick Minter led the Bearcats to three straight winning seasons, a first for the program since the 1970s, and to a victory in the Humanitarian Bowl in '97.

Then came the downfall. The Bearcats lost their first nine games in '98 before finishing the season with victories over Houston and Arkansas State. It left Minter determined to get the program back on track. In an effort to do so, Minter hired five new assistants, including two new coordinators, and moved an assistant from offense to defense. Former Auburn quarterbacks coach Jimbo Fisher takes over as offensive coordinator and Rick Smith, who helped Tulane to a 19-4 record the past two years as its defensive coordinator, takes over that job for the Bearcats.

Minter went for a quick fix on talent, landing 12 junior-college transfers among his 17 signees. The move seemed necessary because of a small class of only 13 seniors.

Offense Only four starters return from Cincinnati's '98 offense, but one of them is junior quarterback Deontey Kenner. While the Bearcats had a down year, Kenner supplied one of the highlights when he became the first underclassman in school history to pass for more than 2,000 yards. Kenner actually split time with quarterback-receiver Chad Plummer and backup QB David Bertucci. Kenner was under center for about two-thirds of the Bearcats' plays. Now that Plummer's gone, the job belongs to Kenner.

At the receiver spot where the big question is who will replace the duo of Plummer and Cornelius Bonner, who combined for 109 catches and 1,619 yards. Two candidates to fill those voids are senior Jason Collins-Baker and junior Tony Smikle.

Collins-Baker has the most experience after starting 22 games the last two years and catching 32 passes for 439 yards and three TDs. Smikle, with good size, has average speed and can catch the ball in traffic.

Also back are sophomores Chris Archie and Tim Walker. Archie has a shot to start after catching 11 passes for 176 yards as a freshman. Freshmen receivers Tye Keith and Jon Olinger will also vie for playing time.

Minter has the luxury of a loaded stable of running backs led by sophomore DeMarco McCleskey, who earned Conference USA All-Freshman honors last season.

Senior Robert Cooper will join McCleskey in the backfield at tailback. He ranks 14th in school history with 1,541 rushing yards.

Sophomores Lloyd Garden and Nathan Wize are the fullbacks, along with Jason Isom. Wize will play primarily on throwing downs after catching 15 passes for 154 yards and two TDs last season. Garden started two games and gained 155 yards in '98.

The Bearcats are thin at tight end where Ashley Hunt, a junior, is the only player with game experience. Although not a starter last season, Hunt saw considerable playing time. Backing him up will be junior Bryan Davis, sophomore Nate Hice and freshman Doug Brandt.

Three starters are gone off last year's offensive line, but the Bearcats are still optimistic about the front line that averages 6-4, 300 pounds. The only returning starters are center Doug Rosfeld and right guard Ken Biggs. Sophomores Andy Weinheimer and Ted Farmer are the likely starters at left tackle and guard, respectively, with Kirk Doolin holding down the right tackle spot.

Defense Rick Smith, former defensive coordinator at Tulane, took over the same job for Cincinnati and installed a 4-3 defense in the spring. Minter also stressed defense in his recruiting efforts, signing 13 junior-college players who should fortify the defense immediately.

While only two defensive starters return, 10 of the top

11 reserves are back. The Bearcats are young at linebacker with DeJuan Gossett the only returning starter. Gossett, a two-year starter, should start at linebacker after finishing second on the team in tackles last season with 78. Either Troy Evans, Antwan Peek or Lewis Carter will start at the other outside linebacker spot. At middle linebacker, two top reserves from '98, Eddie Johnson and Kwesi Daniels, will vie for the starting job. Johnson has the edge for the starting job after a strong finish in '98.

Although only one starter returns in the secondary, it appears to be one of the more stable areas of the team's defense. Free safety Freddy Smith has moved from free safety to strong safety and will compete with Bobby Fuller for the starting job.

That move makes way for the return of free safety Tinker Keck, who suffered a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his knee early last season. Keck was a first-team All-Conference USA player in '97 and also a leader of special teams. Keck pondered an NFL career before deciding to take part in spring practices. As a junior, he returned four punts for touchdowns. Danny Adams is a probable starter at one cornerback spot, while either Jeff Burrow, LaVar Glover or Ivan Fields will battle for the other.

The defensive line must be rebuilt after losing all four starters and two top reserves from last year's team. Nine returning lettermen and five junior-college transfers will try to fill the void. Sophomores Paul Stephens and Joe Hamilton lead the race for the jobs at defensive end, but JUCO transfer Greg Lee and sophomore Kirk Thompson will push them for the jobs.

Sophomores Ben Piening and Dante Elliott and junior-college transfer Mario Monds have the inside track on starting jobs at defensive tackle. Also bidding for those jobs are DeMarcus Billins and Sean Cronin, each a red-shirt freshman.

The Bearcats were last in Conference USA in total defense, last in rushing defense (244.4 yards per game) and fourth in passing defense (240 yards). Minter wants to improve those numbers in '99.

Special Teams Junior Jason Mammarelli returns as the long-range placekicker, while Joe Judge will handle shorter attempts. Judge was 9 of 15 last year, including five of six from inside 40 yards. Mammarelli kicks 60-yards in practice, but missed his only two attempts last year, both from 57 yards. Sophomore Adam Wulfeck returns as the punter after being chosen to the all-conference freshman team a year ago. Tinker Keck should be one of the top punt returners in the conference this year.

New One to Know Mario Monds, a transfer from Hutchinson (Kan.) Community College, is expected to be an impact player for the Bearcats as a defensive tackle. His father is Wonderful Monds, Jr., an All-American at safety at Nebraska from 1973-75. Mario made 84 tackles last season and earned NJCAA All-America honors. His brother, Wonderful Monds III, is an outfielder in the Cincinnati Reds' organization.

Schedule As if the conference schedule wasn't tough enough, the Bearcats will take on three top-notch nonconference opponents in Ohio State, Wisconsin and Miami (Ohio). The threesome all figure to offer stiff tests to Cincinnati's rebuilt defense as all possess running backs who will soon be performing in the NFL. The nonconference game against Division I-AA Troy State isn't a gimme, either. The Bearcats will be playing Ohio State for the first time since 1931. Kent went 0-11 last year, so it looks like a good way to start the Bearcats' season.

PROJECTED RECORD: 4-7

ALABAMA-BIRMINGHAM

BLAZERS

It's another new season and another new challenge for Alabama-Birmingham's football program, which makes its debut in Conference USA this season. The Blazers made the jump from Division I-AA to Division I Independent status three seasons ago, and their latest move is another quantum leap.

Fortunately, Blazers coach Watson Brown has most of his '98 team returning intact. Ten starters return on the offensive side, seven on the defensive side. There are 57 lettermen returning from the 4-7 team of a year ago. It looks like good timing for the move into Conference USA.

While many of the same players are back, Brown has made some changes in terms of coaching and overall philosophy. Pat Sullivan, former head coach at Texas Christian, takes over as offensive coordinator. The Blazers will go from an option-oriented offense to more of a multiple offense featuring the run. This will be the first time the Blazers have faced a full schedule of Division I opponents, and Brown couldn't be happier about joining Conference USA.

"It's been awfully hard for these kids to line up and play a Nebraska, then turn around and play a I-AA (team) the next week," Brown said.

The Blazers have been looking forward to that for quite a while. Conference USA presidents voted in 1996 to admit UAB in '99.

"I think it means an awful lot to be in a conference and play for a conference championship," Brown said. "It adds to the motivation factor."

Offense As the Blazers say good-bye to the option offense, they hope to say hello to some more yardage and points. UAB will still feature the rushing game, but the option will now be merely a much lower choice.

Brown will have two quarterbacks who have been starters the last two years. Daniel Dixon started nine games last year and has 10 career starts. Lee Jolly started 10 games in '97 and had two starts last season. Jolly didn't take part in spring practices because he doubles as a baseball player. Joining Dixon in spring workouts were redshirt freshman Thomas Cox and true freshman Matt Johnson.

Two-year starter Lucious Foster is back for another run at tailback. Foster enters his senior season ranked second in career attempts, yards and rushing touchdowns in the program. He is also second in all-purpose plays and yards. Three others will give the Blazers depth at tailback: senior Cedric Thatch, junior Percy Coleman and sophomore Jegil Dugger.

Despite some youth at fullback, the Blazers have plenty of experience. Junior Cory Conley and sophomore Bernard Anderson will battle for the starting job. They combined for 10 starts last season. Also pushing for playing time will be sophomore Jeremy Carter and junior Joe Meadow, who moves from nose guard to fullback this year.

Senior Darrius Malone returns after leading the Blazers in receiving last season. Malone will be joined by a talented and experienced group of receivers, including sophomore Maurice Gallery, junior Travis Johnson and seniors Daryl Johnson, Ernest Ross and Quentin Troupe. Ross made the move from quarterback to receiver.

Despite the offensive line only having one senior, fifth-year center Brandon Herring, the Blazers have plenty of experience. Several players have started over the last two seasons, including sophomore tackle Josh Case, sophomore guard Preston Fray, junior guard Tim Medders, and sophomore tackle Bo Perry. Junior Brett Richards, who played tight end the last two seasons, has moved to center.

Joining that group will be three junior-college transfers who practiced with the team in the spring: guards Tony

Dollison and Kevin Ford and center Ryan Estes. Brown expects some heated battles for starting lineman jobs in the fall. Junior Undrae Crosby returns as the starting tight end. Johnny Arrington, also a junior, will challenge Crosby for the starting job.

Defense For the first time in a few years, the Blazers enter the season with more questions to be answered on defense than offense.

The Blazers' defensive line won't be as big as it has been in recent years, but it will be a more athletic bunch. Leading the defensive front will be junior Rodney Jones at nose guard and redshirt freshman Tanner Allen at tackle; sophomore Derrick Cloud and Eric Lampley are two of the top defensive ends.

Also in the mix on the line are junior Bryan Thomas and sophomores Marlon Bush, Eddie Freeman and Hassan McKeithan. Otis Leverette, a junior-college transfer, will see lots of time.

Senior linebacker Shannon Monroe is gone, and so is would-be junior linebacker Brian Smith, who passed up his senior season to enter the NFL draft. Bidding for the three linebacker spots will be seniors Scott King and Darnell Stiell, sophomore Nick Stewart and redshirt freshman Starlin Ridley.

UAB has an experienced secondary returning. Free safety Wes Foss and strong safety Kris Neal both started last year. Yudonn Biassou will also battle for the job at strong safety. Starting cornerbacks Dwight Platt and James Williams are also back. Junior Rodrigis Brooks is expected to return from a hip injury sustained in last year's season opener against Nebraska and vie for the job at cornerback. Seniors Scotty Hollins and James Williams and sophomore Adrian Singleton also return.

Special Teams Placekickers Jake Arians and Rhett Gallego return after sharing the duties last season with departed Wade Waldrop. Arians handled kickoffs and long field-goal attempts, while Gallego was a short-range guy. Junior Daniel Dixon and senior Lee Carter are also back for the punting job, along with redshirt freshman Ross Stewart. Dixon, also a likely starter at quarterback, probably won't be the punter, though. Brown would rather that job go to Stewart or Carter. Lucious Foster should be the top return man after leading in punt returns last year with 17 for a 12.4-yard average.

New One to Know High expectations will follow running back Carl Fair from East Mississippi Community College to UAB. Fair rushed for 697 yards and averaged eight yards per carry in seven games last season. He had 76 carries for 580 yards as a freshman. A former all-state high school player in Starkville, Miss., Fair was chosen the deep South's top junior-college player by one recruiting publication. He earned all-state and all-conference honors last season at East Mississippi CC.

Schedule UAB doesn't have a Nebraska or Tennessee on the schedule again, but it does face a tough road trip to Virginia Tech and a full Conference USA schedule for the first time. The Blazers and Hokies play for the third straight year, and the Hokies have outscored the Blazers, 78-0, the last two years. UAB will be playing three Conference USA members for the first time ever (Houston, Louisville, Tulane) and two nonconference opponents for the first time (Missouri and Wake Forest). The Blazers face another tough game against Louisiana Tech, which won last year's game, 54-23, and should have a better shot at Legion Field against Northeast Louisiana, which won on its field, 20-14, last season.

PROJECTED RECORD: 3-8

LOCATION: Birmingham, AL
ENROLLMENT: 15,850
STADIUM: Legion Field (83,091)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 4-7
COACH: Watson Brown
CAREER: 51-102-1; **HERE:** 19-25
BOWL: None
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 57

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
QB	Daniel Dixon*	6-3	195	Jr.
RB	Lucious Foster*	5-10	185	Sr.
FB	Cory Conley*	6-1	218	Jr.
WR	Darrius Malone*	6-3	185	Sr.
WR	Quentin Troupe*	6-0	175	Sr.
TE	Undrae Crosby*	6-5	262	Jr.
LT	Josh Case	6-6	295	So.
LG	Preston Fray	6-5	305	So.
C	Brandon Herring*	6-2	285	Sr.
RG	Tim Medders*	6-3	290	Jr.
RT	Bo Perry*	6-6	300	So.
K	Rhett Gallego*	6-0	185	So.

DEFENSE				
POS	PLAYER	HT	WT	CL
DE	Eddie Freeman	6-4	280	So.
DT	Marlon Bush	6-3	255	So.
NG	Rodney Jones*	6-2	270	Jr.
DE	Bryan Thomas	6-4	230	Jr.
LB	Darnell Stiell	6-1	195	Sr.
LB	Scott King*	6-2	245	Sr.
LB	Nick Stewart	5-11	215	So.
CB	Dwight Platt*	5-11	176	So.
CB	James Williams*	6-3	205	Sr.
FS	Wes Foss*	5-11	180	So.
SS	Kris Neal*	6-2	205	Sr.
P	Lee Carter*	6-0	230	Sr.

*denotes returning starter

RETURNING LEADERS

RUSHING				
Lucious Foster	YDS	AVG	TD	
	568	5.7	3	
PASSING				
Daniel Dixon	YDS	PCT	TD	INT
	870	49.6	0	6
RECEIVING				
Darrius Malone	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
	24	530	22.1	2
KICKING				
Rhett Gallego, 7 of 7 FGs, 11 of 13 PATs				
DEFENSE				
Kris Neal	TKLS	MISC		
	92	—		

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Missouri	—
Sept. 11	at Virginia Tech	L, 0-41
Sept. 25	Houston	—
Oct. 2	Northeast Louisiana	L, 14-20
Oct. 9	Memphis	—
Oct. 16	at Cincinnati	—
Oct. 23	at Wake Forest	—
Oct. 30	at Louisville	—
Nov. 6	East Carolina	L, 7-26
Nov. 13	Louisiana Tech	L, 23-54
Nov. 20	at Tulane	—

1998 TEAM STATISTICS

	TOTAL	RANK
Total offense	300.3	N/A*
Total defense	348.6	N/A*
Scoring offense	21.5	N/A*
Scoring defense	28.0	N/A*

(Not applicable because UAB begins its first season as a full-fledged Conference USA member in 1999)

BIG WEST

BY MIKE PRATER

CONFERENCE

PROJECTED FINISH

	CONFERENCE	OVERALL
1. Nevada Wolf Pack	5-1	7-4
2. Idaho Vandals	4-2	6-5
3. Boise State Broncos	4-2	7-5
4. Utah State Aggies	3-3	5-6
5. New Mexico St. Aggies	3-3	4-7
6. North Texas Eagles	2-4	3-8
7. Arkansas State Indians	1-5	2-9

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

	HT.	WT.	CL.
QB David Neill, Nevada	6-5	200	So.
RB Chris Lemon, Nevada	5-11	200	Sr.
RB Demario Brown, Utah State	6-1	213	Sr.
WR Trevor Insley, Nevada	6-1	195	Sr.
WR Ryan Prestimonic, Idaho	5-9	179	Sr.
TE Ron Teat, Arkansas State	6-3	265	Sr.
OL Jeremy Mankins, Boise State	6-5	324	Sr.
OL Cameron Norcross, Nevada	6-0	270	Sr.
OL Ryan Scuffy, Nevada	6-2	285	Sr.
OL Jason Berger, New Mexico State	6-3	287	Sr.
OL Rick DeMulling, Idaho	6-5	296	Jr.

DEFENSE

	HT.	WT.	CL.
DL Tim Englehardt, New Mexico State	6-2	278	Sr.
DL Falemao Tosi, Idaho	6-6	270	Sr.
DL Rick Cross, Nevada	6-4	280	Sr.
DL Corbin Montgomery, North Texas	6-0	247	Sr.
LB Jason Burk, Nevada	6-1	235	Sr.
LB Brent Passey, Utah State	6-1	231	Jr.
LB Bryan Johnson, Boise State	6-1	228	Sr.
DB Bryson Gardner, Idaho	6-0	192	Sr.
DB Dempsey Dees, Boise State	5-10	174	Jr.
DB Maxzell Williams, Nevada	5-11	185	Sr.
DB Ramone Archie, North Texas	5-11	180	Sr.

SPECIALISTS

	HT.	WT.	CL.
K Brad Bohn, Utah State	5-7	177	Jr.
P Andy Kohl, New Mexico State	6-4	210	Jr.
KR Broderick McGrew, North Texas	6-3	204	Sr.

GAME OF THE YEAR: Idaho at Nevada, Nov. 6. This is the Big West championship game and it'll be played in Reno, where the Wolf Pack have won 11 of their last 13 league games. They pounded Idaho, 58-23, last season in Moscow. This year's game will be closer, but Nevada's potent passing game vs. Idaho's suspect secondary will be the difference in a 42-33 shootout.

UPSET OF THE YEAR: Idaho at New Mexico State, Oct. 30. The vastly improved Aggies will win their first game in seven series meetings. New Mexico State made it close last season in Moscow before losing to the eventual league champions, 36-32. New Mexico State's single-back offense will have a productive day, thanks to an experienced offensive line that will dominate the Vandals' front seven. Final score: 37-34.

1. NEVADA WOLF PACK

David Neill. That's the first—and most important—part of the premier program in the Big West. The 6-foot-5, 200-pound sophomore quarterback and all-league first-teamer is the guy who can return Nevada to the championship status it has enjoyed most of this decade. The Wolf Pack were a disappointment last season, mostly because of an inconsistent offense, a generous defense and poor nonconference results, but Neill was only a freshman. He still managed a 57.8 completion percentage, 3,249 yards and 29 TDs. Most of this season's passes will be fired at 6-1, 195-pound senior Trevor Insley, who led the team in yardage per catch (17.7) and TDs (11).

When Neill isn't passing, he'll hand the ball to 200-pound senior bulldog Chris Lemon (1,154 yards, 13 rushing TDs in 1998). Lemon has a chance for his third straight 1,000-yard season, espe-

cially with help from five returning starters on the line and rock-steady tight end Darin Higgins.

Seven defensive starters return, none more critical than 6-1, 235-pound senior linebacker Jason Burk. He led the team with 101 tackles last season. His partner is 6-2, 220-pound junior Arona Taele, a linebacker who hits .290 as the starting leftfielder on the baseball team. Cornerbacks Del Bates and Mark Carminer, both juniors, each had two interceptions last year. The best talent in the defensive backfield, though, might be senior strong safety Maxzell Williams. He's coming off a season of 70 tackles, four sacks and one interception. For Nevada to dominate the way it should, its defense must improve after allowing 396.5 yards and 28.7 points a game.

Still, the program is as healthy as one gets in the Big West. Nevada returns 19 starters from a team that missed a conference title by only one TD. It also signed 27 recruits in the offseason: 26 incoming freshmen and one junior college transfer.

LOCATION: Reno, NV
ENROLLMENT: 12,500
STADIUM: Mackay Stadium (31,545)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 6-5, 3-2 Big West
COACH: Jeff Tisdell
CAREER: 20-14; **HERE:** 20-14
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 42

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	Oregon State	L, 6-48
Sept. 11	at Colorado State	L, 14-26
Sept. 18	at Oregon	—
Sept. 25	Fresno State	W, 35-19
Oct. 2	Nevada-Las Vegas	W, 31-20
Oct. 9	at New Mexico State	L, 45-48
Oct. 23	at Boise State	W, 52-24
Oct. 30	North Texas	L, 21-27
Nov. 6	Idaho	W, 58-23
Nov. 13	at Arkansas State	—
Nov. 20	Utah State	W, 26-21

2. IDAHO VANDALS

The Big West champs will play their home games at Martin Stadium on the Washington State campus in Pullman. It's eight miles from Moscow, but the Vandals are hoping it will mark the end of a long battle with the NCAA. The program is not officially Division I-A because it doesn't meet stadium size and attendance requirements. The Kibbie Dome seats 16,000, far short of the required 30,000. Also, Idaho has never averaged 17,000 fans for a season, another requirement. The Vandals hope to achieve Division I status by attracting 68,000 fans for their four "home" games, including one against Washington State. It shouldn't be a problem. And the Vandals should be allowed to return to the Kibbie Dome in 2000.

As for football, Idaho is loaded with 18 returning starters from a team that beat Southern Miss in the Humanitarian Bowl. The problem is, two of the missing starters were the heart and soul of the team—running back Joel Thomas and middle linebacker Ryan Skinner. Senior

Michael Moody (92 yards last year, 0 TDs) and junior Anthony Tenner (221, 2 TDs) will try to replace Thomas, the leading rusher in school history. Senior James Dorough gets Skinner's job, although he's a converted end who missed part of last season and spring ball with a bad knee.

Flashy sophomore quarterback John Welsh might be the league's most confident player after last year's 1,387-yard, 11-TD debut that included an MVP performance in the Humanitarian Bowl. This season, he'll work behind five returning linemen and throw to senior Ryan Prestimonic (42 catches, 668 yards, 6 TDs), junior Jeffrey Townsley (31, 462 yards, 6 TDs), junior Willie Alderson (31, 419 yards, 1 TD) and sophomore Ethan Jones (20, 438, 3).

The defensive line is anchored by senior tackle Falemao Tosi—a 270-pound brute on the basketball team—and 300-pound sophomore nose-guard Wil Beck. Linebackers Chris Nofoaiga (82 tackles, 11 sacks) and Matt Jasik (50 tackles, nine sacks) roam the middle, while three-year starter Bryson Gardner switches from free safety to strong safety.

LOCATION: Moscow, ID
ENROLLMENT: 11,730
STADIUM: Martin/Pullman, WA (37,600)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 9-3, 4-1 Big West
COACH: Chris Tormey
CAREER: 26-19; **HERE:** 26-19
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 58

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Eastern Washington	W, 31-14
Sept. 11	at Auburn	—
Sept. 18	Washington State	L, 16-24
Oct. 2	at Wyoming	—
Oct. 9	North Texas	W, 41-23
Oct. 16	at Arkansas State	W, 52-14
Oct. 23	Utah State	W, 26-14
Oct. 30	at New Mexico State	W, 36-32
Nov. 6	Nevada	L, 23-58
Nov. 13	at Montana	—
Nov. 20	Boise State	W, 36-35, OT

3. BOISE STATE BRONCOS

Boise State is better after four years of disaster, but it still doesn't have enough talent to challenge for the Big West title. At least it has a coach back for a second season. That hasn't happened since 1994-95 when Pokey Allen roamed the sidelines before dying of cancer. Idaho native Dirk Koetter is the man now and apparently he's fond of the blue and orange. He turned down an offensive coordinator position in the Big 12 as well as a chance to coach quarterbacks for the Green Bay Packers. He could have worked with former NFL MVP Brett Favre in a job where the two predecessors (Steve Mariucci and Andy Reid) got NFL head coaching jobs. Instead, Koetter gets to work with 6-0, 200-pound junior Bart Hendricks, who's building his own decent career. This is Hendricks' third season as a starter and he has 2,920 yards and 21 touchdowns for a program that has lost 21 of its last 34 games.

The offensive skill positions are up for grabs following the loss of

two leading rushers and seven receivers. There is talent to fill the holes, starting with 5-10, 190-pound junior tailback Davy Malaythong, who had a solid spring. There is speed and size in the receiving corps and all offensive linemen return, including all-league first-teamer Keith Dilworth, a 315-pound beast who's planning to make it back in 1999 after tearing the ACL in his right knee in last year's finale against Idaho.

A defense that gave up 396.1 yards and 31.8 points a game will be better, or at least more experienced. There isn't a faster linebacker in the league than 228-pound senior Bryan Johnson, who has 161 tackles in his last two seasons. He stands behind a line that features three returning starters—senior ends Andy Bennett and Mike Maloy, along with senior tackle Jon Rydman. The secondary is deep and athletic, but the one to watch is junior cornerback Dempsey Dees. He led the Big West with five interceptions last season. The rest of the team had three.

LOCATION: Boise, ID
ENROLLMENT: 15,832
STADIUM: Bronco Stadium (30,000)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 6-5, 2-3 Big West
COACH: Dirk Koetter
CAREER: 6-5; **HERE:** 6-5
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 32

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at UCLA	—
Sept. 11	Southern Utah	—
Sept. 18	at Hawaii	—
Sept. 25	New Mexico	—
Oct. 2	Utah	W, 31-28
Oct. 9	E. Washington	—
Oct. 16	at North Texas	L, 13-21
Oct. 23	Nevada	L, 24-52
Oct. 30	at Utah State	W, 30-16
Nov. 6	Arkansas State	—
Nov. 13	New Mexico State	W, 55-51
Nov. 20	at Idaho	L, 35-36, OT

LOCATION: Logan, UT
ENROLLMENT: 20,808
STADIUM: Romney Stadium (30,257)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8, 2-3 Big West
COACH: Dave Arslanian
CAREER: 56-55; **HERE:** 3-8
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 41

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Georgia	—
Sept. 11	Stephen F. Austin	—
Sept. 18	at Utah	L, 12-20
Oct. 1	Brigham Young	—
Oct. 9	Arkansas State	—
Oct. 16	at Kansas State	—
Oct. 23	at Idaho	L, 14-26
Oct. 30	Boise State	L, 16-30
Nov. 6	New Mexico St. W.	29-26, 2OT
Nov. 20	at Nevada	L, 21-26
Nov. 27	at North Texas	W, 28-27

4. UTAH STATE AGGIES

Utah State is scrambling to solidify its quarterback position. Its best defensive player is gone from last year's team that won only three games. And the Aggies will face four 1998 bowl teams before Halloween (Georgia, BYU, Kansas State and Idaho). Other than that, the football program is doing just fine at Logan, where a new multi-million dollar indoor practice facility kept the Aggies hopping during a snowbound offseason.

Sophomore Jeff Crosbie emerged from spring camp with the starting quarterback job, a position he held for the final four games of last season. Three others could threaten for playing time. Whoever emerges as the starter for the Sept. 4 opener at Georgia will rely on one man to make the offense click: senior running back Demario Brown. He needs 1,417 yards to become the all-time leading rusher in school history and has rushed for 100-plus yards in 13 of his last 21 games.

There are big holes to fill on the offensive line and at wide receiver, so it'll be easy for opponents to focus on Brown and the Aggies' one-back attack.

Middle linebacker—and league defensive MVP—Tony D'Amato is gone after a 170-tackle season, but the strength of this year's team should remain the defense. Junior right end Caleb Smith (6-4, 268) will anchor the front seven along with 6-1, 231-pound junior linebacker Brent Passey. Senior left cornerback Vashon Garmon and sophomore right cornerback Tony Walker are returning starters, as is senior safety Donald Dicko.

The most talented athlete on the team might be junior kicker Brad Bohn, who is being trumpeted as preseason All-American talent by the Aggies. He's hit 33 of 43 field goals, 56 of 63 PATs and has averaged 79 points a game in his first two seasons. The 24 field goals he hit last season were Utah State and Big West records and the ninth-best single season in NCAA history.

LOCATION: Las Cruces, NM
ENROLLMENT: 15,008
STADIUM: Aggie Memorial (30,343)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 3-8, 1-4 Big West
COACH: Tony Samuel
CAREER: 5-17; **HERE:** 5-17
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 51

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 2	New Mexico Highlands	—
Sept. 11	at New Mexico	W, 28-27
Sept. 18	at Arizona State	—
Sept. 25	at Texas-El Paso*	W, 33-24
Oct. 2	at Colorado State	L, 28-47
Oct. 9	Nevada	W, 48-45
Oct. 23	at Army	—
Oct. 30	Idaho	L, 32-36
Nov. 6	at Utah State	L, 26-29
Nov. 13	at Boise State	L, 51-55
Nov. 20	North Texas	L, 11-19

*Designated Big West game

5. NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES

Sports Illustrated once labeled New Mexico State's program as "the worst in all of Division I football." There's a new title in Las Cruces these days: The Aggies might be the most improved program in the nation. Third-year coach Tony Samuel, still taking advantage of his Nebraska roots, is on the verge of giving New Mexico State its second winning season since 1979. In Samuel's first year, the Aggies lost all five conference games by a total of 116 points. Last season, they lost four by a total of 19.

That's the good news. Here's the bad: For the first time since 1994, you won't find Dennis Manns in the backfield. He had four straight 1,000-yard rushing seasons. He finished with 4,692 yards and 23 TDs. Now 5-11, 180-pound sophomore Kenton Keith—who says he turned down Nebraska to be the man at New Mexico State—gets to step

into Manns' shoes. He'll run behind a line that features 6-3, 287-pound senior tackle Jason Berger, 6-0, 281-pound junior center Matt Hancock and 6-4, 314-pound senior guard George Hudson. All three have started at least 22 straight games.

Senior Ty Houghtaling is a quarterback in a running offense and still finished with a league-high 12 interceptions last year. His primary target will be senior Ryan Shaw, who accounted for 678 yards and 13 TDs last season.

The defense was atrocious last season, allowing 465.6 and 38.5 points a game. Nine starters return, so the Aggies should get better based on experience alone. The shining star of the group is 6-2, 278-pound senior nose tackle Tim Englehardt, a second-team all-league performer in 1998. The Aggies had a league-low 17 quarterback sacks last year. By comparison, Idaho led the Big West with 42.

LOCATION: Denton, TX
ENROLLMENT: 25,013
STADIUM: Fouts Field (30,500)
SURFACE: Artificial Turf
1998 RECORD: 3-8, 3-2 Big West
COACH: Darrell Dickey
CAREER: 3-8; **HERE:** 3-8
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 37

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 2	UNLV	—
Sept. 11	at LSU	—
Sept. 18	at Texas Tech	L, 0-30
Oct. 2	at Baylor	—
Oct. 9	at Idaho	L, 23-41
Oct. 16	Boise State	W, 21-13
Oct. 23	Arkansas State	—
Oct. 30	at Nevada	W, 27-21
Nov. 13	at Texas Christian	—
Nov. 20	at New Mexico St.	W, 19-11
Nov. 27	Utah State	L, 27-28

6. NORTH TEXAS EAGLES

The Mean Green won three games last year—and almost won a Big West championship. The three wins came in league play, and had it not been for a one-point loss at Utah State and Idaho's overtime squeaker at Boise State, UNT would be riding high this season. Still, there's some leftover confidence hanging around in Denton, even if the talent isn't there for a championship run.

There are holes all over the place, starting at quarterback. Senior Jason Attaway, who started eight games in '98, missed spring camp because of a knee injury. Four others battled for playing time, but the position is wide open this fall. The lucky winner gets to hand off to 5-10, 188-pound junior tailback Ja'Quay Wilburn, one of the league's best athletes. He rushed for 501 yards in the final three games of last season and averaged a league-best 5.4 yards per carry. The standout wide receiver is 6-3, 204-pound senior Broderick

McGrew, a big-play machine who also led the nation in kick-off returns (32.6 yards per return). Quarterback convert LaDarrin McLane, who played receiver in high school, joins him. UNT will struggle on the line after losing four seniors, which doesn't bode well for an offense that scored only 17 TDs last season.

Thank goodness for defense, which is what UNT is counting on. The toughness starts up front with 6-0, 247-pound senior end Corbin Montgomery, who has 15 sacks in his last 20 games. The rest of the line needs help, but all three starting linebackers return for their junior seasons. That group includes 6-1, 233-pound Jeff Rodgers, 6-0, 190-pound Fred Pertile and 6-3, 208-pound Corry Pertile.

There's leadership in the secondary, where senior cornerback Detron Woodson, senior strong safety Ramone Archie, senior cornerback Kendrick Sapp and junior cornerback Lawrence Ellis have starting experience.

LOCATION: Jonesboro, AK
ENROLLMENT: 10,050
STADIUM: Indian Stadium (33,410)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
1998 RECORD: 4-8, Independent
COACH: Joe Hollis
CAREER: 10-23-1; **HERE:** 6-17
LETTERMEN RETURNING: 49

SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	1998 RESULT
Sept. 4	at Illinois	—
Sept. 11	at Mississippi	L, 17-30
Sept. 18	at Memphis	L, 19-35
Sept. 25	TCU	—
Oct. 2	Sam Houston State	—
Oct. 9	at Utah State	—
Oct. 16	Idaho	L, 14-52
Oct. 23	at North Texas	—
Oct. 30	SW Louisiana*	L, 19-21
Nov. 6	at Boise State	—
Nov. 13	Nevada	—

*Designated Big West game

7. ARKANSAS STATE INDIANS

The independent days are over at Arkansas State and the Indians move into a conference that seems like a natural fit. Like a lot of Big West teams, they will lose most of their non-conference games, play sound offense and scramble like crazy on defense. Arkansas State spent three years in the Big West earlier this decade and won only four league games. Success won't come any easier this time as the Indians try to replace some of the best talent in school history.

Two of the missing names were on defense: end Clarence Williams (team-high 10 sacks) and cornerback Chappell Mitchell (team-high six interceptions). Even with those two, the Indians gave up 446.8 yards and 32.1 points a game. There are no returning starters on the defensive line, but all four starting linebackers return, including seniors Reginald Cooley (6-2, 215) and Michael Bailey (5-11, 205). Cooley had six sacks

and Bailey has been clocked in the 40 at 4.5. Junior strong safety Sean Mitchell had only one interception last year, but the 5-9, 190-pounder finished with a team-high 126 tackles.

Quarterback Cleo Lemon is only a junior, but the 6-2, 230-pounder has a chance to become the school's all-time leading passer this season. He threw for a school-record 2,721 yards last season. He also was sacked 36 times and has hit the ground 61 times in his last 20 games. The offensive line has been trouble at Arkansas State, which averaged only 85 rushing yards a game last year. This year's roster includes 13 linemen, 11 of whom are underclassmen. At least Lemon has some talent in the skill positions. There's 6-3, 265-pound senior tight end Ron Teat (56 catches for 860 yards and 7 TDs in the last two seasons), 5-11, 165-pound junior wide receiver Robert Kilow (22.8 yards per catch last year) and 5-8, 180-pound running back Lamont Zachery (1,790 careers yards, 19 TDs).

MID-AMERICAN

BY DON VANDERVEEN

CONFERENCE

INSIDE THE MAC

TEAM ON THE RISE

Western Michigan. The Broncos can score a ton of points, and their defense is adequate. The opportunity to earn a place among the MAC's elite teams comes in WMU's final two games against Marshall and Toledo.

TEAM ON THE FALL

Kent. Outlook looks bleak with its best player from a year ago (wide receiver Eugene Baker) gone. Baker, who led the nation in receptions in 1997 with 103 catches for 1,549 yards, was a fifth round draft pick of the defending NFC champion Atlanta Falcons this past April. If it weren't for brand-new Division-IA team Buffalo, there would be nowhere left to fall in the MAC East for Kent.

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Travis Prentice, Miami (Ohio). With apologies to Marshall's gifted quarterback Chad Pennington, Prentice is in position to break several of the NCAA rushing records Heisman Trophy winner Ricky Williams set in 1998.

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Dustin Cohen, Miami (Ohio). All he's done for the past two seasons is record more tackles than teammate Jojuan Armour, who was named the MAC's top defensive player both years. With Armour gone, it's Cohen's turn in the spotlight.

MUST-SEE GAMES

Marshall at Miami (Ohio), Oct. 2; Marshall at Western Michigan, Nov. 13; Western Michigan at Toledo, Nov. 20

UNDERRATED

Doug Chapman, Marshall. Chapman has lived in the shadows of the Heisman Trophy pursuits of Randy Moss and now Chad Pennington, but has "quietly" managed to rush for over 1,000 yards in each of his first three seasons at Marshall.

NEXT STOP NFL

Prentice. Pennington.

JOHNNY ON THE SPOT

Dan Cole, Tavares Bolden or Justin Larrick, Toledo. The Rockets have all the ingredients in place to win a third consecutive MAC West Division title, if they get solid play from a first-year starter at quarterback.

RECRUITING WINNERS & LOSERS

Winners: Marshall, Miami, Toledo, Western Michigan; Losers: Buffalo, Northern Illinois, Kent, Ball State

ODDS AND ENDS

Marshall's 101 victories during the 1990s are the most ever for a college football team in one decade. Miami (Ohio)'s Travis Prentice is the nation's top returning rusher (1,787 yards in '98). Miami tied an NCAA record by losing just one fumble in 1998 and the RedHawks' 112 consecutive made PAT kicks is the longest such streak in the nation. Since 1995, Toledo's 33-10-1 regular-season record (.761) is the ninth-best among Division I-A schools.

East Division

1. MARSHALL Since moving up to Division I-A status two years ago, "Marshall Law" has ruled in the Mid-American Conference. Coach Bob Pruett's 23 victories are the most ever for a team's first two years in Division I-A football, and his .846 winning percentage ranks second only to Tennessee's Phillip Fulmer (.857). Marshall's 15-0 Division I-AA record under Pruett in 1996 is the best ever in college football.

Marshall has won both MAC championship games since rejoining the conference in 1997. That success has Mid-American Conference coaches scratching their heads and wondering: Does this team ever have to rebuild?

"We were a young team last year," Pruett said. "Our team should be stronger on paper than last year, if we stay healthy and eligible. But the whole league is stronger. We should have a chance to be competitive again."

How competitive? The Thundering Herd compiled a record of 12-1 in 1998 and returns nine starters on offense and 10 on defense. Eight of those players are All-MAC selections. Heading the list of returnees is quarterback Chad Pennington, the nation's only returning finalist for the 1998 Davey O'Brien Award, given annually to the top college quarterback in the country. Pennington has ripped the airwaves for 63 touchdowns over the past two seasons and has thrown for more than 10,000 yards in his career. He is being hyped for the Heisman and will be supported in that pursuit by a massive offensive line that remains intact, except for the right tackle spot.

Two years ago, Pennington had Randy Moss as his favorite target. Last year, he had LaVorn Colclough (40 receptions, 591 yards, 6 TDs). This year, watch for Nate Poole, who had 48 catches in '98, to become the featured receiver in Marshall's high-powered aerial attack. Marshall is not a one-dimensional offensive machine, though. Senior tailback Doug Chapman has already accumulated more than 3,500 yards and 44 TDs in his career, and has the opportunity to become the first player in Marshall history to rush for over 1,000 yards in each of his four years. He rushed for 1,265 yards and 17 TDs en route to All-MAC honors as a junior.

"He's a great player," Pruett said of Chapman. "Anybody else who runs for that many yards would get a lot of notoriety, but he's played on teams with Randy Moss and Chad Pennington."

On defense, 15 of Marshall's 16 leading tacklers return, led by senior linebacker John Grace, who made 143 stops, including 15 for loss. Three other returnees-free safety Rogers Beckett (118 tackles, 3 INTs), cornerback Daninelle Derriott (60 tackles, 6 INTs) and defensive tackle Giradie Mercer (96 tackles)—were all first-team All-MAC selections in 1998. Marshall also welcomes the return of defensive end Paul Toviessi, who Pruett called the team's top defensive player before going down with an injury in the second game of the 1998 season.

2. MIAMI (Ohio) Miami of Ohio lost only to MAC champion Marshall en route to a 10-1 record last year. But after compiling one of its greatest single seasons ever, the losses began adding up. The RedHawks took big graduation hits in three major areas: All-American linebacker Jojuan Armour on defense, all-time receiving yardage leader Jay Hall on offense and All-MAC place-kicker John Scott on special teams. Miami also lost its coach Randy Walker, who left in January to take over the program at Northwestern.

The cupboard, however, is far from empty. Miami returns 10 starters on offense, and if one player can define a team's chances for winning in the MAC, it is RedHawk tailback Travis Prentice. Prentice, a two-time Doak Walker Award semifinalist and 1998 MAC Player of the Year, helped carry the RedHawks to one of their greatest seasons ever in 1998 by rushing for 1,787 yards and 19 touchdowns. "Touchdown Travis" is one of the nation's top

returning running backs with 3,937 career yards and 56 TDs. He has Miami's entire starting offensive line back to block for him in his pursuit of the NCAA's all-time rushing and scoring records.

"Travis puts a tremendous burden on opposing defenses because he's so versatile," first-year Miami (Ohio) coach Terry Hoepfner said. "Travis is a strong, powerful runner, but when he gets in the open field and turns it on, all of a sudden he's one of the fastest players on our team."

"This year, we want him to be an effective pass receiver and we'll focus on his ball-catching skills. He can turn a lot of five-yard receptions into 10 and 20-yard gains."

Without Hall to throw to, Miami (Ohio) quarterback Mike Bath will gladly welcome Prentice into the scheme as a receiver. The key for Miami, however, is being able to chew up time on the clock offensively with Prentice running north and south. That will not only move Prentice closer to the NCAA record books, but it will also keep Miami's rebuilding defensive unit off the field.

Despite the loss of Armour, Miami's defense will return one of the MAC's premier players in Dustin Cohen. The senior outside linebacker led the MAC with 146 tackles and recorded four interceptions, two that were returned for touchdowns.

"In terms of the total package, he's got it all," Hoepfner said. "Dustin is the best defensive player I've ever coached. He's explosive and he's a scorer on defense, which is a real asset."

The rest of the RedHawk defense must develop around him. Punter Kent McCullough has averaged over 41 yards per boot during his career.

"Defensively, our biggest concern is creating depth at various positions," Hoepfner said. "If there is an area where we have some question marks, it rests with the special teams."

3. BOWLING GREEN If there was a surprise team in the MAC for 1998, it was Bowling Green. Just ask Marshall. Bowling Green, which was 5-3 in MAC play, ambushed the Thundering Herd, 34-13, to give Marshall its only loss of the season. Coach Gary Blackney's Falcons were supposed to be in a rebuilding mode one season after finishing at 3-8.

But Blackney's rags-to-riches success has been well-documented in the MAC before. He took over a Bowling Green program that had suffered five straight losing seasons in 1991 and promptly won two consecutive MAC titles.

Bowling Green turned it around last year by re-establishing a running game that went from a woeful 107th in the nation to 13th. Eight starters return to that offensive unit, including fullback Brent Martin (295 yards rushing in 1998), tailback Godfrey Lewis (team-high 753 yards rushing) and an offensive line anchored around right tackle Chad McCarthy (6-4, 280).

Ricky Schneider (55 of 103, 649 yards, 4 TDs, 4 INTs in eight games in 1998) replaces three-year starter Bob Niemet at quarterback. He'll be throwing to 1998 MAC Freshman of the Year Kurt Gerling and Robert Redd, two sophomores who averaged 19.3 yards and 18.6 yards, respectively, per catch.

"He has the best supporting cast of any quarterback here since Ryan Henry (in 1991 and '92)," Blackney said. "He has a solid offensive line to work behind, he has running backs and three experienced wide receivers."

Senior Joe O'Neill (team-high 95 tackles in 1998), who made a transition from inside linebacker to the outside, is the most experienced player on defense. The secondary, however, is young and suspect.

"Blending the experience at the linebacking spot with some youth and experience on the line and in the secondary is the goal," Blackney said.

4. AKRON Akron plays a MAC schedule stacked in its favor. It's not so much who the Zips play this year, but who they don't play. Off their schedule in 1999 are defending MAC East champion Marshall and defending MAC West champion Toledo. The Zips also get to play four of their final six games at home in the Rubber Bowl.

The Zips were competitive in 1998. But there is a difference between being competitive and winning, as Akron's 4-7 record (2-6 in the MAC) reveals. Four of Akron's losses—to East champion Marshall, West champion Toledo, and divisional runners-up Miami and Central Michigan—came by a total of 25 points.

"Last season was by far the most competitive football

team we have fielded in our four seasons," fifth-year coach Lee Owens said. "We've come so far, but the next piece of the puzzle is to win more games."

"We need to learn to win, and to perform in pressure situations."

Akron's balanced offensive attack (2,064 yards passing and 2,059 rushing in 1998) is led by junior quarterback James "Butchie" Washington, who broke 12 school records as a sophomore. Owens has implemented a shotgun and one-back formation to open things up for Washington to throw or run and better his school-record 2,072 yards in total offense.

"The ceiling is pretty high for Butchie," Owens predicts. "He can get a whole lot better. We expect to have the whole playbook to really change the entire field so our opponents can't load up against the run. That will make our running game that much more effective."

Returning outside linebacker Nate Johnson (67 tackles), along with defensive linemen Ade Edwards (21 tackles, one sack), Jermaine Williams (22 tackles, 1.5 sacks) and Ron Smith (31 tackles, 2 sacks), should help the Zips defend better against the run, but Akron must rebuild much of its secondary.

"We were a lot better on defense than we were the year before," Owens said. "Our goals are to increase the number of turnovers we get, particularly interceptions, and improve our run defense."

Akron begins MAC play on Sept. 11 against newcomer Buffalo. Just because the Zips caught a break on their MAC schedule doesn't mean that their non-conference games will be a breeze. Akron must open the season on Sept. 4 against Penn State at Happy Valley.

5. OHIO Ohio University Coach Jim Grobe—who took over a winless program five years ago—has worked wonders in Athens by posting three consecutive winning seasons in MAC play. Whether or not he can work his magic again and compete for a MAC championship after losing 19 seniors is anybody's guess. It doesn't make it any easier with Miami and Marshall standing on the schedule for the final two games of the season.

Ohio's offense, which ranked second in the nation in rushing (276.7 yards per game), was hit hard by graduation. Quarterback Kareem Wilson and tailback Steve Hoofkin, the two leading rushers in school history, are no longer around to carry the load. In fact, Hoofkin (3,972 career rushing yards) signed as a free agent with the Atlanta Falcons this spring. The only returning starters on the offense are All-MAC center Mike Varone (6-3, 265) and tight end Drew Dwyer.

Quarterback Dan Jordan is making the transition from backup quarterback to starter. Although Jordan may be a better passer than Wilson, he lacks the foot speed and running ability of his predecessor.

"Offensively, the quarterback position will be key and we may not have an answer to that question until we start playing," Grobe said. "Our backfield is talented, but it will all depend on the ability and maturity of our quarterback."

The defense also is inexperienced with just five starters returning. Inside linebacker Mark Calgano and outside linebacker Leigh Barbour will be counted on for senior leadership. Sophomore punter Dave Zastudil was an All-MAC selection as a freshman after finishing fourth in the nation with a 45.2 average.

"Our schedule will be a bear for us once again, but I hope that when we get to Miami and Marshall at the end of the season, the games mean something," Grobe said.

They will. But they will probably mean more for Miami and Marshall.

6. KENT What happens to a football program that goes 0-11 and loses its best football player? Second-year Kent coach Dean Pees will find that out this year as his Golden Flashes attempt to end the skid. The Golden Flashes will have to do it without big play maker Eugene Baker, who set several Kent receiving marks and was averaging 114.2 yards per game before a broken collarbone ended his senior season after only six games. Despite the injury, Baker was still a fifth-round draft pick of the Atlanta Falcons this spring.

Senior quarterback Jose Davis attempts to re-establish the foundation he set during a stellar sophomore season when he passed for 2,707 yards in just seven games as a starter. Last year, Davis threw for 2,046 yards and nine

TDs, but was intercepted 10 times. Davis needs 834 yards passing to break the Kent all-time record and will be looking for Jurron Kelly (31 catches, 476 yards in '98) to fill Baker's shoes (or perhaps, more accurately, his hands) at wide receiver.

Tight end Jason Gavazda (19 catches, 260 yards in 1998) also returns.

Defensively, the Golden Flashes must improve on the 473.5 yards a game they allowed in '98. That unit could get a boost from 6-foot-4, 288-pound senior Brad Hartman, who is making the switch from the interior of the line to defensive end.

But the needs are great for a team that gave up an average of more than 40 points a game in 1998 and Kent will have to battle just to stay out of the cellar.

7. BUFFALO Buffalo moves into Mid-American Conference play for the first time, but don't look for a Marshall-like emergence here. The Bulls will be greeted and mistreated far more rudely than the Thundering Herd were three years ago.

Coach Craig Cirbus' Bulls were 4-7 in their final season as a Division I-AA Independent, and lost quarterback Chad Salisbury (154 of 287, 2,058 yards, 15 TD passes in 1998) to graduation. Buffalo does, however, return nine starters on both offense and defense. Wide receiver Drew Haddad is the school's all-time reception leader (155). He has 2,251 career receiving yards, including a school record 1,058 as a sophomore.

The Bulls have four quarterbacks who have started a total of four collegiate games among them. All four are still vying to be the one trying to get the ball to Haddad.

Senior fullback Josh Roth returns after gaining 806 yards and scoring eight touchdowns, along with an entire offensive line. Derrick Gordon (321 yards rushing, 3 TDs in six games) has shown some promise at tailback, but is coming back from a season-ending injury.

Despite having nine returning starters, Buffalo's defense is a young group that will be tested often against the high-powered MAC offenses of Marshall, Miami and Western Michigan.

West Division

1. TOLEDO Toledo has won the past two MAC West titles in different ways: The Rockets won with offense in 1997 and with defense in '98. But one thing remained constant: Toledo lost to Marshall in the MAC championship game both years. Therefore, maintaining a balance on both sides of the ball is key for the Rockets this year.

"We've got to be good on offense and good on defense," Toledo coach Gary Pinkel said. "I'm tired of us being strong in one area and just okay in another."

The Rockets ranked among the MAC's best in most defensive categories in 1998. Several of the key players from that unit return, including All-MAC linebacker Jason Lamar, who recorded 119 tackles with 12 for losses. Defensive end DeJuan Goulde (6 sacks in 1998) is a strong pass rusher. Depth-wise, Toledo returns 20 of the 24 players who were listed on the two-deep charts in '98.

"It's exciting, because we have a chance to get significantly better," Pinkel said. "We're returning a very good defensive football team, but we still have to get better."

"We need our best players to have their best years."

The offense, meanwhile, needs someone to step up to replace quarterback Chris Wallace, who threw 17 TD passes during his senior year. Junior Dan Cole has some experience, sophomore Tavares Bolden is solid and freshman Justin Larrick has the talent to lead the Rockets. All three are unproven at the collegiate level, but bet on Cole (2 of 2, 15 yards in 1998) to be the opening-day starter.

"Quarterback is a position of vital importance," Pinkel said.

Whoever emerges as the No. 1 signal caller will receive plenty of help upfront with all 10 offensive linemen from the two-deep charts returning, including two-time All-MAC offensive tackle Colin Westrich (6-6, 295).

Toledo also returns tailback Chester Taylor (570 yards, 5 TDs), who averaged 5.5 yards per carry, along with senior tight end Mike Bilik, a two-time All-MAC selection, and junior wide receiver Mel Long. Bilik, who was kept out of contact drills this spring after undergoing offseason

shoulder surgery, caught 39 balls for 417 yards and two TDs last season. Long tallied 31 receptions for 446 yards and five scores.

"Overall on offense, we've got our continuity back," Pinkel said. "We've always been a strong offensive football team here and the potency of our offense must return."

2. WESTERN MICHIGAN Western Michigan is taking a three-tiered approach to its season. The first is a rugged non-conference schedule with games at Florida and Missouri. The second is a six-game stretch of Mid-American Conference games. And, after a one-week hiatus, the Broncos end the final phase of the regular season with back-to-back games against Marshall and Toledo, two teams that have finished first in their respective divisions for the past two seasons.

"We need to come out of that first part of our schedule with the confidence and energy to go into the middle season," WMU coach Gary Darnell said.

The Broncos have won 15 games over the past two seasons under Darnell. It is the highest two-year victory total in WMU history.

"We have better depth and experience, and more quality players than in our first two years," Darnell said. "More pieces are in place for our building the program in terms of personnel, playing schemes and facilities."

At Western, it starts with a high-octane offense that features the arm of junior quarterback Tim Lester, who has put up impressive numbers during his first two seasons, including 3,311 yards and 22 TDs as a sophomore. Lester will be throwing to All-MAC split end Steve Neal (63 receptions, 1,121 yards, 7 TDs in 1998) and All-MAC tight end Jake Moreland (44 catches, 457 yards, 6 TDs).

Mammoth senior tackle Charlie Knapp (6-5, 333) is back to anchor an offensive line that helped Western rack up an average of 467.9 yards a game. Behind that line, the Broncos became only the 14th team in NCAA Division I-A history to have a 3,000-yard passer (Lester), 1,000-yard rusher (now-departed Darnell Fields) and a 1,000-yard receiver (Neal) in the same year.

Inside linebackers Garrett Soldano (106 tackles) and Mario Evans (78 tackles) lead eight starters back on a defense that ranked among the MAC's best in several categories. Defensive backs Eric Nunlee and Ronald Rogers return after intercepting four passes apiece in '98.

WMU placekicker Brad Selent, a one-time walk-on, was recognized as the MAC's Special Teams Player of the Year after booting 18 of 26 field goals, including a season-long 56-yarder vs. Central Michigan, and making all 40 extra points as a sophomore.

3. CENTRAL MICHIGAN Central Michigan hopes its upward climb in the MAC standings continues to catch on, but the Chippewas are going to have to do it without their most prolific receiving duo in history.

CMU rebounded from a 2-9 record in 1997 to finish 6-5 in '98, and looks for continued improvement in '98. In order for that to happen, the Chippewas must find a way to outscore its opponents while its defensive unit develops.

"We lost a lot of good football players and have our work cut out for us, but we want to continue with the momentum and progress we made," head coach Dick Flynn said. "We made great improvement on defense and want to keep those things going."

Although the Chippewas return junior quarterback Pete Shepherd, they must replace four of their top five receivers, including two-time All-MAC selection Reggie Allen, who combined with Bryan Schorman to catch 207 passes over the past two seasons.

"It is a critical area for us, but we do feel good about our quarterback," Flynn said.

Senior tailback Eric Flowers is back after rushing for 1,302 yards and 16 touchdowns behind returning offensive linemen Eric Page, John Herrold and Matt Brayton.

Defensively, sophomores Tedaro France and Wayne Dudley return at the corners, while junior Brian Leigeb is back for his third season as the starting free safety, where he has led the team in tackles for the past two seasons. CMU must replace its "Gold Rush" combination of linebacker brothers Jeremy and Jason Gold, and its entire three-man front.

"We don't have a lot of experience there, but I am pre-

Mid-American Conference

ty confident in the abilities of the young men we do have," Flynn said.

4. EASTERN MICHIGAN The schedule is not very kind to Eastern Michigan this year. The Eagles open at Michigan State on Sept. 11 and are on the road a total of seven times. Eastern also plays at Central Florida and Louisville, and must travel to play against MAC powers Miami (Ohio) and Toledo, as well as rival Central Michigan in Mt. Pleasant.

To avoid becoming road kill before their final game at Northern Illinois, the Eagles, who were 3-8 in '98, need to continue to improve on their offensive numbers. EMU coach Rick Rasnick plans on going to Church for help.

Eastern Michigan junior quarterback Walt Church—who was baptized under fire as a true freshman when he replaced an injured Charlie Batch midway through the 1996 season—has 19 games under his belt as a starter and is closing in on virtually every EMU career passing record. He'll have the Eagles' top seven receivers returning, led by Jermaine Sheffield, who paced the team with 62 catches for 953 yards and four TDs.

EMU's running game was among the MAC's worst, however. Eastern averaged just 88.6 yards per game on the ground, and Eric Powell, Idris Wells and Ethan Vannoy will attempt must improve on those numbers to support Church. The Eagles must also find someone to replace 6-foot-6, 320-pound L.J. Shelton on the offensive line. Shelton was the No. 1 pick for the NFL's Arizona Cardinals in last April's NFL draft.

Free safety Lincoln DuPree led the team in tackles in '98, while cornerback Donald McCall was second in the MAC with five interceptions. However, the Eagles need additional help upfront against the run.

"This is the first time since I've been here that we are not searching for a lot of candidates for starting positions," Rasnick said. "We have a group of strong players returning, and we are hoping that some players step up and fill in at key spots, especially on both the offensive and defensive lines."

5. BALL STATE Bill Lynch has won five conference titles during his nine years as a collegiate head football coach, but his fourth season at Ball State in 1998 is one he'd just as soon forget. The Cardinals not only struggled to score, but they couldn't stop anybody, either. The result was a 1-10 record.

Ball State averaged just over 15 points per game, and those woeful offensive numbers looked even worse combined with an uncharacteristically poor defensive showing. Now, the Ball State coach—who won a MAC championship in 1996—needs his team to improve on both sides of the ball in order to avoid a Lynch mob in Muncie, Ind.

"Ball State is a program rich in tradition, and we will get the program back to its rightful place in college football and the Mid-American Conference," Lynch vowed. "We were very disappointed with our 1998 season, but we have to put that behind us and move on to 1999."

Ten starters return to the defense, which has traditionally ranked among the MAC's best before the 1998 season, when the Cardinals were ranked no better than ninth in the conference in any of the major defensive categories.

Inside linebacker Ernest Pressley was the team's third leading tackler (85) despite making only eight starts in 1998. He leads a defensive unit that includes former wide receiver Larry Davis, who made the transition to outside linebacker for six games where he grabbed two interceptions and ranked among the team leaders in sacks (2) and pass breakups (3).

"We have quality starters returning at nearly every position and will utilize personnel in a slightly different manner in 1999," Lynch said.

Only three concrete starters return to an offense that sputtered at best last season. Jumbo-sized Ryan Carter (6-5, 305) and Aaron Johnson (6-5, 310) anchor the offensive line, while wide receiver Adrian Reese (27 catches, 341 yards in 1998) has led the Cardinals in receptions over the previous two seasons. Ball State ranked 11th in scoring offense, 10th in passing offense and eighth in rushing offense in the MAC under three different quarterbacks last year. Question marks at that position—as well as at running back—will continue to haunt the Cardinals, unless someone emerges.

6. NORTHERN ILLINOIS Northern Illinois is a streaky team. Unfortunately for the Huskies, the streaks have been more heavily weighted on the losing side than with victories.

The Huskies ended the longest losing streak in the nation for Division I-A teams (23 games) with a 16-6 victory over Central Michigan last year. Northern Illinois actually put together a two-game winning streak by defeating Eastern Michigan one week later before losing its final four games.

With injuries toppling quarterbacks like dominoes, the Huskies were forced to start sixth-string quarterback Craig Harmon, a freshman walk-on, for eight games.

"I've been coaching for 30 years and never had to play a sixth-string anything before," NIU coach Joe Novak said. "Hey, what Craig did for us in eight games is amazing, and he got us two wins."

If there is any reason for optimism heading into the 1998 season, it is because 15 of 22 starters return (not including all of the quarterbacks).

"We've always said that this was the group to take us

to the next level," Novak said. "They think they're pretty good. And they might be right."

Offensive tackle Ryan Diem (6-7, 325) and flanker Justin McCareins (54 receptions, 486 yards, 5 TDs) both earned All-MAC honors as sophomores. McCareins also returns punts and kickoffs. The Huskies, however, failed to rank higher than ninth in any major offensive category. That may change with the return of No. 1 quarterback Chris Finlen, who missed the entire season last year after breaking his collarbone in practice.

"We haven't done squat on offense for three years and have to be more productive," Novak said.

Lamain Rucker, a 6-2, 300-pound defensive tackle, who has a 715-pound squat lift, could become a force in the MAC if he receives additional support from an experienced front four and secondary.

"The time is now," NIU Coach Joe Novak said. "I'm not saying we're a championship-caliber football team, but you can't rebuild forever."

Novak may be right about rebuilding. But then, has any coach ever lasted long enough to find out?

MAC PROFILE MARSHALL QB CHAD PENNINGTON

Pennington has been...impressive enough for the Downtown Athletic Club to request pertinent information about the Marshall signalcaller for the second consecutive year.

BY DON VANDERVEEN

First, there was wide receiver Randy Moss. For the past two years, it has been quarterback Chad Pennington. Marshall University has been a member of NCAA Division I-A for a mere three years and has promoted a player for the Heisman Trophy in each of those seasons like it is an annual rite of fall.

Since its arrival in 1997, Marshall has promoted more candidates for college football's greatest individual honor than Alabama, Notre Dame or USC combined. What gives? Marshall moves up from Division I-AA and immediately begins promoting its own like a traditional big college blue blood. The nerve!

"No one predicted that we'd be able to come right in to Division I-A and win right away, either," said Marshall coach Bob Pruett, who has won two straight Mid-American Conference championships and sports an overall record of 22-4 since moving up from the Division I-AA ranks.

Pennington, who has already thrown for more than 10,000 yards in his career, has put his signature on all 22 of those victories. "Players from smaller universities can play as well as those from big-time programs, but a lot of small school players don't receive the respect or notoriety they deserve," Pennington said. "Those are things I can't control. What I can control is our team's success."

With an NCAA-record 25 touchdown receptions in 1997, Moss had the numbers to support the Heisman hype, and his NFL Rookie of the Year showing with the Minnesota Vikings re-affirmed it.

"I think with Randy on our team and going through the Heisman race helped us," Pennington said. "It helped the university with notoriety and showed our team what it was like to get that kind of attention. That type of exposure helped everyone, and we proved it the next year that it was more than just one player that created our success."

"I've got to remember that there are 10 more players out there and that awards such as the Heisman reflect on teammates as much as an individual."

Pennington has been equally as impressive for the Thundering Herd. Impressive enough for the Downtown Athletic Club to request pertinent information about the Marshall signalcaller for the second consecutive year.

"I don't feel any additional pressure from the Heisman Trophy campaign, because I am from a small school," Pennington said. "I keep reminding myself that I am Marshall's quarterback, I play for Marshall and it is my job to keep Marshall successful. Hopefully, if I can maintain that focus, the university will be recognized and I will be recognized."

In 1997, Pennington, threw for 3,480 yards and set an NCAA record for touchdown passes by a sophomore (39), throwing for more scores than either Peyton Manning or Ryan Leaf. As a junior, Pennington threw for 3,419 yards and 24 touchdowns with seven interceptions. Only

Kentucky's Tim Couch, the No. 1 pick in the 1999 NFL draft, posted better numbers among the quarterbacks considered Heisman Trophy finalists. Couch threw for 4,275 yards and 36 TDs, but was intercepted 17 times. Pennington was named Most Valuable Player of the 1998 Motor City Bowl after throwing for 411 yards and four touchdowns in a 48-29 victory over Louisville.

Perhaps Pennington's most impressive numbers as a starting quarterback are predicated on Marshall's overall record of 34-5. Marshall has won the past two Mid-American Conference championships with Pennington, who was redshirted in favor of Florida transfer Eric Kresser in 1996. As a true freshman in 1995, Pennington led Marshall to a 12-3 record. He also maintains a 3.75 G.P.A. as a broadcast journalism major.

"In all my years of coaching, Chad is the best quarterback I've ever been around," Pruett said. "He's got it all and was as good as anybody in the country last year. He's a first-round NFL pick, no question, and would have been this year, too."

"Here's a guy who is an honors student, does community service and is a Christian person who has his life in order. If you've got a daughter, you want her to marry a guy like Chad, and if you've got a son, you want him to be like Chad."

And if you're a coach, you want him to throw like Chad. After just two seasons in the Mid-American Conference, Pennington has already tied the league's career record for touchdowns (63). He owns four other MAC single-season records, including most TD passes in a season (39) and most passing yards (3,480).

Last spring's quarterback bonanza at the NFL draft left Pennington as college football's only returning top-10 finalist for the 1998 Davey O'Brien Award, presented annually to the nation's top QB.

"The draft was interesting and allowed me to refocus on what to do on the field and off the field as far as training habits and so forth," Pennington said. "It reminded me of all the goals I set for myself and staying on the straight path to accomplish those goals."

Pennington already has been selected as *Playboy's* National Scholar Athlete for 1999, but do Heisman voters take anything but on-field success into consideration? "Sure they do, or else Randy Moss would have won it in 1997," Pruett said. "He proved in the NFL last year that he was the best player coming out."

"Chad has the whole package with academics and athletics, and he's done it on the field, too."

Thanks to Marshall's promotional efforts, Pennington also has his own web site (www.HerdQB.com), complete with statistics and other pertinent information about the All-American candidate. Marshall also has distributed what seems like a ton of pens promoting Pennington, just in case some Heisman voters need another reminder while filling out their ballots.

DIVISION I-AA

BY JEREMY TREATMAN

Shipp Shapes Up To Be Quite A Runner

Following his heart has paid off. Last year, Marcel Shipp ended his sophomore season with 2,542 rushing yards, 18 touchdowns, and a national championship.

Three years ago, Marcel Shipp didn't listen to recruiters from Division I-A schools such as Clemson who pursued him solely as a safety. Yes, Shipp had been a standout at that position in high school and during his one year of prep school ball, but he could think of 4,354 reasons why he was better suited to be a college running back.

Namely, the 4,354 yards that the 6-foot, 195-pounder had rushed for prior to choosing to attend the University of Massachusetts—the 3,239 yards at Passaic Tech and the 1,115 additional yards in his one season at Milford (Ct.) Prep.

"It was hard to understand why everyone wanted me as a safety," said Shipp. "I could have played Division I football, if I agreed to play in the secondary. But UMass wanted me as a running back. I didn't care that it was a I-AA school. I just wanted to follow that dream. As soon as I came for my visit, I knew that was where I wanted to go."

Following his heart has paid off. Last year, Shipp ended his sophomore season with 2,542 rushing yards, 18 touchdowns, and a national championship. In the I-AA title game against previously unbeaten Georgia Southern, Shipp rushed 35 times for 244 yards and three touchdowns to lead the Minutemen (12-3) to a stunning 55-43 victory.

"He is as good a back as I've ever seen," said Georgia Southern defensive coordinator Rusty Russell. "We couldn't stop him. He's a very good back with a load of ability."

"It was a day I'll never forget," said Shipp of the title win. "I knew we had potential as a team. We had lost three times earlier in the season. But as the playoffs rolled along, we gained momentum."

Does Shipp feel the same about his own potential?

"I've always felt since high school that I could play with anybody. I really did," says Shipp. "I'm not the first guy who had to prove myself at the I-AA level. But at the same time, I have been a guy who has never looked ahead. When I was in high school, I thought of prep school (when I didn't have the grades for college). Since being in college, I have only thought about my team and not the future. Now that I am getting closer to graduating, I can dream about the NFL. But I'm also a realist. I know that it's a long shot, and I need something to fall back on. I'm going to work hard in class and on the field until the day I finish here."

If Shipp continues to dominate on the I-AA level, he may start to get looks from NFL player personnel types. In just two years at UMass, Shipp has rushed for 3,298 yards and is already third at the school in all-purpose yards (4,241).

A quick straight-ahead runner, Shipp enters this season with 12 straight games rushing for over 100 yards. He was named first or second-team All-America by five different national organizations last year and begins this season as a member of *Preview Sports'* 1999 preseason All-America team.

"I have to keep all the talk in perspective," he said. "There are guys out there who are bigger and faster than me and teams that could be better than us. All I'm thinking about is the team. We won the championship last year but now we are setting our goals on an Atlantic-10 Championship, and from there who knows? That's where my head has to be right now."

Jeremy Treatman is a freelance writer from Bryn Mawr, Pa.

1999 NCAA DIVISION I-AA PRESEASON ALL-AMERICAN TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER, SCHOOL	HT.	WT.	CL
QB	Chris Boden, Villanova	6-2	205	Sr.
RB	Marcel Shipp, Massachusetts	6-0	195	Jr.
RB	Adrian Peterson, Georgia Southern	5-10	210	So.
RB	Charles Roberts, Cal State-Sacramento	5-6	170	Jr.
WR	Mike Furrey, Northern Iowa	5-9	177	Sr.
WR	Jacquay Nunnally, Florida A & M	6-0	215	Jr.
TE	Mike Leach, William & Mary	6-4	238	Sr.
OL	William Broussard, Northwestern State	6-0	254	Sr.
OL	Mark Williams, Georgia Southern	6-1	312	Sr.
OL	Brad Meester, Northern Iowa	6-4	287	Sr.
OL	Mitchell Foreman, Hampton	6-4	305	Sr.
OL	Bennie Anderson, Tennessee State	6-5	305	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER, SCHOOL	HT.	WT.	CL
DL	Vonceilles Allen, Georgia Southern	6-0	286	Sr.
DL	Al Lucas, Troy State (Ala.)	6-3	280	Sr.
DL	Branon Vaughn, Tennessee Tech	6-1	226	Sr.
DL	Troy Lefevra, Indiana State	6-3	216	Sr.
LB	Kevin Peterson, East Tennessee St.	5-10	240	Sr.
LB	Fred Bishop, Samford	5-11	235	Sr.
LB	Ian Eason, Lehigh	6-1	210	Sr.
LB	Galen Scott, Illinois State	5-8	205	Jr.
DB	Eric Johnson, Western Carolina	6-2	206	Sr.
DB	Dwyte Smiley, Youngstown State	5-11	185	Sr.
DB	Eric Sloan, Troy State (Ala.)	5-9	180	Sr.
DB	Donald Turner, Hampton	5-11	190	Jr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER, SCHOOL	HT.	WT.	CL
K	Bill Gramatica, South Florida	5-10	180	Jr.
P	Matt Bushart, Southern U	6-4	258	Sr.
KR	Brian Westbrook, Villanova	5-8	185	Jr.

1999 Division I-AA Preseason Top-10

1. GEORGIA SOUTHERN

Running back Adrian Peterson (2,606 yards, 34 TDs in 1998) and quarterback Greg Hill (1,658 yards passing, 1,587 yards rushing last year) return to pace a potent attack. The Eagles' 1998 national title game stumble vs. UMass should be all the incentive this team needs to win it all in 1999.

2. UMASS

Sixteen of the team's 22 starters return from the 1998 national champs, including superstar back Marcel Shipp (217 all-purpose yards per game) and QB Todd Bankhead (5,919 yards, 34 TDs, 20 INTs).

3. APPALACHIAN STATE (N.C.)

If Georgia Southern somehow falters in the Southern Conference, ASU—led by returning 1,000-yard rusher Terrance McCall—could emerge as a national title contender.

4. NORTHERN IOWA

QB Ryan Helwig and one-time Ohio State transfer Mike Furrey (148 catches last two seasons) form one of the best pass-catch combinations in the country.

5. NORTHWESTERN STATE (La.)

Northwestern State will be pushed in the always-tough Southland Conference by Troy State and McNeese State, however they do return a pair of legit 1999 All-America candidates in safety Mike Green and center William Broussard.

6. RICHMOND

The Spiders bring back 14 starters, including a pair of All-Atlantic 10 performers in linebacker Paris Lenon and defensive back Chris Anderson.

7. YOUNGSTOWN STATE (Ohio)

Twenty-six seniors return to lead Youngstown State (6-5 in 1998) back into the national spotlight. Dwyte Smiley (123 tackles in 1998) is considered the top free safety in I-AA football.

8. TROY STATE (Ala.)

Troy State (which moves up to Division I-A in the year 2002) should be in the I-AA national title hunt this season, thanks in large part to the return of a pair of All-American candidates: CB Eric Sloan and DL Al Lucas.

9. MONTANA

BYU transfer Drew Miller has some big shoes to fill—those of passing whiz Brian Ah Yat. But a pair of All-American candidates in receiver Jeremy Watkins (72 catches, 885 yards, 7 TD catches in 1998) and hard-hitting LB Marcus Wilson (68 tackles) should lead the Grizzlies to another Big Sky title.

10. LEHIGH (Pa.)

The return of senior quarterback Phil Stambaugh (3,704 passing yards, 23 TD passes in 1998) and senior tailback Ron Jean (1,122 rushing yards, 16 rushing TDs last season) makes Lehigh a prohibitive favorite in the Patriot League.

1999 NCAA DIVISION II PRESEASON ALL-AMERICAN TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER, SCHOOL	HT.	WT.	CL
QB	Corte McGuffey, Northern Colorado	6-1	200	Sr.
RB	Reggie Donner, Central Oklahoma	5-9	208	Sr.
RB	Damian Beane, Shepherd (W. Va.)	5-8	195	Sr.
WR	Tony Miles, Northwest Missouri St.	5-9	180	Jr.
WR	Kevin Ingram, West Chester (Pa.)	6-1	170	Sr.
TE	Jim Golomski, Pittsburg State (Kan.)	6-4	250	Sr.
OL	Robert Garza, Texas A&M-Kingsville	6-2	285	Jr.
OL	John Fitzgerald, Central Oklahoma	6-5	300	Sr.
OL	Cliff Clemons, Texas A&M-Kingsville	6-4	285	Sr.
OL	Chris Bober, Nebraska-Omaha	6-5	290	Sr.
OL	Brian Hinson, Catawba (N.C.)	6-4	290	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER, SCHOOL	HT.	WT.	CL
DL	Aaron Becker, Northwest Missouri State	6-3	285	Sr.
DL	Cedric Killings, Carson-Newman (Tenn.)	6-3	315	Sr.
DL	Casey Beran, Chadron State (Neb.)	6-3	240	Sr.
DL	Eric Neff, Indiana (Pa.)	6-2	230	Sr.
LB	Scott Zimmerman, Northern Colorado	6-1	235	Sr.
LB	Michael Walton, Eastern New Mexico	5-10	205	Sr.
LB	Antonio Speed, Valdosta State (Ga.)	6-0	236	Sr.
DB	Che Bryant, Tuskegee (Ala.)	6-2	195	Sr.
DB	Johnnie Jones, Central Oklahoma	5-8	165	Sr.
DB	Joe Caviglia, California-Davis	5-11	185	Sr.
DB	Brian Polk, Slippery Rock (Pa.)	5-9	175	Sr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER, SCHOOL	HT.	WT.	CL
K	Jason Williams, Southern Arkansas	6-3	175	Jr.
P	Jason Gross, California (Pa.)	6-1	190	So.
KR	James Rooths, Shepherd (W. Va.)	6-1	195	Jr.

DIVISION II

BY ANDY SEELEY AND WENDY BROKER

Touchdown Tony

"I would like the team to look to me when they need a big play," he said. "I would like to take it on my shoulders."

Tony Miles joined the Bearcats as an unknown high school running back in 1996. However, since moving to receiver, he has certainly made his presence felt. In fact, some say he's the single most exciting performer in Division II football.

"It took a while for him to adjust," Northwest Missouri State coach Mel Tjeerdsma said. "He redshirted a year, and now he fits. He feels at home, and has far exceeded our expectations at this point. He has become a big-play person. We try to get the ball in his hands as many times as possible. He is very dependable and comes through in the clutch."

Miles' versatility is unmatched in the D-II ranks. Miles caught 60 passes for 980 yards and 11 touchdowns in the regular season last year. He made 25 catches for 326 yards and five TDs in the playoffs during Northwest Missouri's 1998 National Championship run. He returned 27 punts for an average of 15 yards a return and one TD. He also returned 11 kicks for an average of 25 yards apiece.

"He's an outstanding player, a real difference maker," said Truman State head coach John Ware. "Any time you play Northwest, you have to contend with him. He is a guy who must be contained if you are going to have the opportunity to win the game. From a skill standpoint, he's one of the best in our league. You just have to try to take him out of his game."

Miles not only offers a challenge to Bearcat opponents, but to his own teammates as well.

"He is a constant test to your ability as a defensive back," Bearcat cornerback Frank Taylor said. "Every time you play against him (in practice), you try and bring your best game. Because at any moment, he can get you."

For fellow Northwest receiver Seneca Holmes, Miles is an encouragement. "I like playing with him, because I have someone to compete with," Holmes said. "I watch him and he watches me. I've learned a lot from him. He keeps me working because of his talent and what he can do. Everybody knows he's good, but he keeps a real level head. Some mistake his quietness for conceit. He has a real appreciation for his talent, though."

The key to Miles' skills is quite simple in his mind. "It's all instinct," he said. "You just try not to get tackled. I'm a little fella and that gives me an advantage over the big guys."

And that advantage will only get greater with time, coach Tjeerdsma said. "Right now he's making lots of big plays, but there are things he can improve," according to Tjeerdsma. "He can become a better receiver, run more routes, his catching can improve. He can be much more of a factor then, because the more he gets the ball, the more opportunities he has to make big plays. We are expecting a lot out of him in the next two years. If we (the team) continue where we are at, he must continue what he's doing."

Miles just wants to be a big part of the action in upcoming years. "I would like the team to look to me when they need a big play," he said. "I would like to take it on my shoulders. I just want to keep winning, and finish it out. I want to do my part to help get us back to where we were—the national championship."

Andy Seeley and Wendy Broker are freelance writers based in Maryville, Missouri.

1999 Division II Preseason Top-10

1. NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE

WR Tony Miles, perhaps the most exciting player in Division II ball, will try to lead the Bearcats to a second straight national title.

2. CARSON-NEWMAN (Tenn.)

With All-American candidates Ques Rumph, Cedric Killings and Montrae Ford all back in the fold, coach Ken Sparks (184-45-2 career record) and his Eagles should once again be in the national title hunt.

3. SLIPPERY ROCK (Pa.)

Fourteen starters are back from last year's national semifinalist, including cornerback Brian Polk (school-record 8 INTs in 1998), defensive end Casey Vogt (16 tackles for loss) and quarterback Randy McKavish (2,035 passing yards, 20 TD passes in '98).

4. NORTHERN COLORADO

Quarterback Corte McGuffey passed for 3,054 yards and 39 TDs in the Bears' 13 games last season.

5. TEXAS A&M-KINGSVILLE

The Javelinas' 1999 national title push will be powered by its unmatched offensive line, lead guard Cliff Clemons and center Robert Garza.

6. CALIFORNIA-DAVIS

Coach Bob Biggs will rebuild the Aggies around WR John Shoemaker (54 catches, 854 yards, 12 TDs in 1998) and DB Joe Caviglia (6 INTs in '98).

7. CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

Tailback Reggie Donner (1,546 yards, 19 TDs), offensive guard John Fitzgerald (6-5, 300) and defensive back Johnnie Jones (11 INTs last season) return for Central Oklahoma, a team which was ranked No. 1 for much of 1998.

8. INDIANA (Pa.)

Defensive ends Roger Wilson and Eric Neff, who ranked No. 1 and 2 in the PSAC in sacks last season, will pressure opposing quarterbacks again in 1999.

9. NEBRASKA-OMAHA

The Mavs' stingy defense will be led by a pair of returning All-North Central Conference choices: SS Nate Sullivan and LB Jason Bartling.

10. WEST GEORGIA

Jeremy Clements (2,232 yards, 24 TD passes), the 1998 Gulf South Conference Offensive Player, is back to play catch with his favorite target, WR Roscoe Pounds (915 yards, 10 TDs).

DIVISION III

BY MIKE POPOVICH

Smeck-tacular Debut

Last season, many believed that Mount Union's death grip on the Division III football world would finally loosen. After all, quarterback Gary Smeck was a first-year starter for the Purple Raiders and the man he replaced under center, Bill Borchert, seemed irreplaceable. Borchert had led Mount Union to back-to-back national championships and had won the Gagliardi Trophy and Melberger Award in 1997.

Raider quarterbacks receive a lot of attention. Their level of excellence over the years keeps expectations high for the football team at this small Alliance, Ohio college (enrollment 2,000). They thrive under the limelight.

Smeck is no different. Last year, he calmly took control of an offense that featured only four returning starters and still led the Raiders to their third consecutive national championship and their fourth title in six seasons. Smeck also became the first member of Mount Union's cradle of quarterbacks to win a championship as a first-year starter.

"He handled everything with a lot of maturity," said Borchert, who worked for an Ohio-based computer company last year which enabled him to come back and mentor Smeck throughout the season. "He was able to take on a leadership role, gain experience and come through in the big games. He adapted real well."

Smeck was only a sophomore last year, but he approached every game like a seasoned veteran. "I didn't feel any pressure at all," Smeck said. "My goal was just to be the starting quarterback."

The groundwork for Smeck to become the Raiders' starting quarterback occurred during his freshmen year. While Borchert was leading Mount Union to another championship in his final season, Smeck was quarterbacking the school's freshmen squad to a 7-0 record.

"Playing on the freshmen team is a tremendous help for any player, especially at my position," Smeck said. "I was able to learn the system."

His experience of running the freshmen team also enabled Smeck to get to know future varsity teammates, like wide receiver Adam Marino. He joined Smeck on the varsity team last year and was the Raiders' second-leading receiver with 74 catches for 1,337 yards and 14 touchdowns.

"Adam and I developed a special relationship while playing on the freshmen team," Smeck said. "We just learned one another. Now we can read one another on the field. We don't even have to speak out there. With just eye contact, we can tell what we're doing."

Smeck completed 66 percent of his passes (287 of 434) for 4,049 yards with 34 touchdowns and 15 interceptions last year. His mental toughness was evident during the postseason when Albion (Mich.), Wittenberg (Ohio), Trinity (Texas) and Rowan (N.J.) all threatened to end a Mount Union winning streak that spanned three seasons as well as the team's two-year reign as national champions.

Two fourth-quarter touchdown passes by Smeck led the Raiders to a come-from-behind victory over Trinity in the semifinals. His three-yard touchdown pass to running back Dave Hassey and two-point conversion pass to wide receiver Darin Kershner also erased Rowan's 24-16 third-quarter lead in the Amos Alonzo Stagg Bowl.

Smeck passed for over 300 yards in all four playoff games, including 307 yards and three touchdowns in Mount Union's 44-24 Stagg Bowl victory over Rowan.

"I think Gary grew up a little bit before today," Kershner said after the Stagg Bowl. "Today, maybe it was more obvious. He gives his all."

The 1999 season should be another memorable one for Mount Union and Smeck. The Raiders will break Oklahoma's NCAA record 47-game winning streak, if they win their first six games. They should also contend for what would be a Division III record fifth national title. And Smeck figures to garner some All-American attention, if he follows up last year with similar success in 1999.

"We have a good core group of athletes returning," Smeck said. "Our skill positions on the offensive side of the ball are looking really strong. But people will be expecting more of us. I think that will create added pressure."

Mike Popovich covers college football for The Repository in Canton, Ohio.

1999 NCAA DIVISION III PRESEASON ALL-AMERICAN TEAM

OFFENSE

POS	PLAYER, SCHOOL	HT.	WT.	CL
QB	Troy Dougherty, Grinnell (Iowa)	6-1	195	Sr.
RB	Casey Donaldson, Wittenberg (Ohio)	6-2	195	Jr.
RB	Steve Tardif, Maine Maritime Academy	5-9	185	Sr.
FB	R.J. Bowes, Grove City (Pa.)	6-1	230	Jr.
WR	Scott Pingel, Westminster (Mo.)	6-1	180	Sr.
WR	Mike Hunter, Catholic (D.C.)	6-1	180	Sr.
TE	Logan Stanley, Westminster (Mo.)	5-11	220	Sr.
OL	Jarryn Avery, Rowan (N.J.)	6-5	290	Sr.
OL	David Coney, Trinity (Texas)	6-1	300	Sr.
OL	Jon Rhiddlehover, McMurry (Texas)	6-4	270	Sr.
OL	Michael Hughes, Emory & Henry (Va.)	6-1	305	Sr.
OL	DeAndre Hardy, Illinois Wesleyan	6-5	305	Sr.

DEFENSE

POS	PLAYER, SCHOOL	HT.	WT.	CL
DL	Russ Alger, Cortland State (N.Y.)	6-2	240	Sr.
DL	Jon Jones, MacMurray (Ill.)	6-1	220	Sr.
DL	Jason Welty, Hanover (Ind.)	6-2	240	Jr.
DL	Matt Domin, Mount Union (Ohio)	6-2	225	Sr.
LB	Brandon Novak, St. John's (Minn.)	5-10	205	Sr.
LB	Dustin Goldsberry, Wittenberg (Ohio)	6-0	225	So.
LB	Tommy Selecky, Western Maryland	5-11	230	Sr.
LB	Seth Duerr, Wooster (Ohio)	5-9	215	Sr.
DB	Mike Cotton, Massachusetts-Dartmouth	5-11	190	Sr.
DB	Eric Feest, Concordia (Wisc.)	5-10	175	So.
DB	Justin Blumenberg, Rose-Hulman (Ind.)	6-2	170	Jr.
DB	Steve Noland, St. Thomas (Minn.)	6-3	195	Sr.

SPECIALISTS

POS	PLAYER, SCHOOL	HT.	WT.	CL
K	David Vitatoe, John Carroll (Ohio)	5-11	185	Sr.
P	Steve Vagedes, Ohio Northern	6-3	220	Sr.
KR	David Zeigler, John Carroll (Ohio)	5-10	160	Sr.

1999 Division III Preseason Top-10

1. MOUNT UNION (Ohio)

The three-time defending national champions can break Oklahoma's NCAA record 47-game winning streak this season.

2. TRINITY (Texas)

Led by 1998 Melberger Award winner Mike Burton at quarterback, the Tigers return all but two players who were from last year's two-deep chart.

3. ROWAN (N.J.)

Jumbo-sized senior left tackle Jarryn Avery (6-5, 290) anchors an offensive line that has helped the Profs average over 400 yards per game the last two seasons.

4. LYCOMING (Pa.)

Wide receiver Tim Dumas is coming off back-to-back 1,000-yard receiving seasons.

5. ST. JOHN'S (Minn.)

Linebackers Brandon Novak and Beau LaBore both registered over 100 tackles in 1998.

6. EMORY & HENRY (Va.)

The Wasps' 31-game home winning streak is the nation's longest in all divisions.

7. WITTENBERG (Ohio)

Tailback Casey Donaldson was the nation's fifth-leading rusher last year at 163.9 yards per game.

8. WESTERN MARYLAND

With the return of two-time Centennial Conference Offensive Player of the Year Ron Sermarini at quarterback and two-time All-American Tommy Selecky at linebacker, the Green Terror hopes to advance past the first round of the playoffs for the first time.

9. ALBION (Mich.)

Quarterback Jason Whalen was intercepted only three times on 231 pass attempts last season.

10. WISCONSIN-WHITEWATER

The Warhawks paced the traditionally-strong Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference in total offense last year at 487.3 yards per game.

RECRUITING '99

Austin's Powers

BY JEREMY TREATMAN

A top-notch salesman of a coach, a 9-3 season and Heisman Trophy-winning tailback helped Texas lure the nation's No. 1 recruiting class.

Who said Texas football was dead? Well, the storied Longhorn program may have been on life support under John Mackovic, but now Texas is back. All the way back. That's the popular sentiment after second-year Texas coach Mack Brown sealed the nation's top overall recruiting haul in 1999.

In addition to receiving a last-second commitment to 6-foot, 5-inch lefthanded quarterback Chris Simms (the nation's most coveted schoolboy), Brown landed seven other top-100 prep players in linebacker Cory Redding, offensive lineman Alfio Randall, tight end Bo Scaife, defensive back Kendrick Turner, running back Kenny Hayter, wide receiver Artie Ellis, and defensive lineman Cole Pittman.

In all, 28 highly-touted prepsters, including two who already started classes last spring, have made or will make the voyage to Austin.

"We feel great about this class," said Brown, who in his debut season turned a 4-7 team into a 9-3 bunch that won a bowl game for the first time since 1981 and enjoyed wins over top-10 teams Nebraska and Texas A & M. "I am greatly impressed with the caliber of player in the state of Texas and that we were able to receive so many commitments from them."

Of the recruits, 19 were first-team all-stars and 11 were named first or second-team All-American by at least one national publication.

"We brought 35 guys to visit and 28 of them came to Texas," said Brown. "We have to congratulate all our coaches, the school itself for providing the best in academics and athletics, and our fans, too. We asked that our fans bring an atmosphere to Royal-Memorial Stadium that was second to none when (recruits visited) and they did that. Our fans deserve a lot of credit for this."

And if this group lives up to its press clippings, Darrell K. Royal-Memorial figures to be rockin' over the next five years. So besides the Longhorns, who were the other big winners in the 1999 recruiting wars? Here's our list of the top 10 incoming recruiting classes...

1. TEXAS

Texas pulled off a rare recruiting double when they landed Chris Simms, the son of former New York Giants QB Phil Simms and the 1998 *USA Today* Offensive Player of the Year Award, and Cory Redding, that publication's 1998 Defensive Player of the Year winner. The only other school to pull off the same *USA Today* "Daily Double" in the 1990s was Florida State in 1991 (RB Marquette Smith, LB Derrick Brooks) and 1997 (RB Travis Minor, DL David Warren). Simms will get most of the preseason ink, but Redding (6-5, 240) might have the most immediate impact. After all, the Longhorns lacked for a pass rush last season and Redding was one of the best rush ends in the prep ranks last season (123 total tackles, 22 for losses as a high school senior).

2. OHIO STATE

The Buckeyes signed ten of the nation's top 150 players and were once again dominant in their home state

(17 of their 24 signees were Ohio products). The best of the homegrown talent is Curtis Crosby, a defensive back with 4.4 40-yard dash speed who played high school ball at nearby Eastmoor (Ohio) High. Three other highly-regarded, in-state prep signees are running back Kelton Lindsay, another 4.4 in the 40 guy who rushed for over 1,500 yards last year for Lebanon (Ohio); defensive back Mike Doss (6-0, 195) from Canton; and jumbo-sized offensive lineman Adrian Clarke (6-6, 315) from Shaker Heights, Ohio. What was impressive was OSU's ability to supplement their impressive in-state haul with some out-of-state gems, most notably 6-5, 305-pound offensive lineman Bryce Bishop out of Miami's Killian High (one of the nation's top five OL prospects) and defensive back Richard McNutt from Park Forest, Illinois.

3. LSU

Coach Gerry DiNardo lost two-thirds of his starters last season, so a banner recruiting class was a must. Bingo. DiNardo landed 10 of his state's top 15 prospects, and in all, 20 of his 27 signees are from Louisiana. Not bad for a team which finished 4-7 last year. The crown jewels of this class are linebackers Bradie James (6-3, 225) and Treverance Faulk (6-3, 220), both of whom chose LSU over Tennessee, Florida, Texas A&M, and Notre Dame, respectively. In addition, tight end Eric Edwards (6-5, 250), defensive lineman Walter Young (6-5, 290), defensive back Domanick Davis (5-9, 196, 4.46 in the 40) and kicker John Corbello are all considered can't-miss prospects.

4. UCLA

The Bruins signed four players that are among most publications' top-50 rated players. Tight end prospect Michael Seidman, a 6-5, 250-pounder, is considered a beast as a blocker and has been likened to former NFL great Mark Bavaro as a pass catcher (54 receptions for 807 yards and 6 TDs in 1998). Beefy offensive linemen Bryce Bonlander (6-6, 270) and Shane Lehmann (6-5, 280) as well as speedy linebacker Marcus Reese (6-2, 210) from San Jose, California look like future stars, while 6-3, 220-pound Los Angeles native J.P. Losman might be UCLA's quarterback of the early 21st century. While Losman figures to sit and learn the ropes the next couple years behind junior Drew Bennett (who replaces Cade McNown this fall), he'll have two tall targets to throw to in fellow freshmen Jerry Owens (6-4) and gamebreaker Ryan Smith (6-3) once he finally does take the field.

5. TEXAS A&M

It's hard to be upstaged in your own state when you land a class that includes four of Texas' top eight prospects. But that's what happened in College Station. Still, A&M coach R.C. Slocum is thrilled to bring in Colby Freeman, a 6-3, 215-pound quarterback who ran or threw for 32 touchdowns last season. Other prominent in-state signees are defensive back Sammy Davis, linebacker Jason Frederick, and defensive lineman Ty Warren. Davis and Frederick both possess 4.4 speed, while Warren was one of the top five players in Texas. Slocum's finest accomplishment, though, may have been his ability to sell California's best running back Joe Weber (2,694 yards, 30 TDs as a senior) on the virtues of the Lone Star state.

6. NOTRE DAME

The Fighting Irish are bringing in their best recruiting class in the Bob Davie era, as 10 first-team all-stars join the mix. Davie is particularly high on Gerome Sapp (6-1, 200), a rare Lone Star State gem who alluded Texas and Texas A&M's grasp. How good is Sapp? He's been

promised a spot in the nickel and dime packages this fall and his signing should allow Davie to move safety Tony Driver back to offense, where Driver will help fill the shoes of departed tailback Autry Denson. The offensive line got a much-needed injection of Grade-A beef from down South when Jeff Faine (6-3, 312) from Sanford, Florida and Sean Mulligan (6-5, 285) from Norcross, Georgia both signed on the dotted line. Two other players who could make a quicker-than-expected impact are defensive lineman Cedric Hilliard (6-3, 300) from Arlington, Texas and tailback Julius Jones from Big Stone Gap, Virginia.

7. ALABAMA

The Crimson Tide look like they are tired of Tennessee stealing the thunder in the SEC. Linebacker Saleem Rasheed (6-2, 225) is gifted enough to start as a true freshman this season, while wideout Antonio Carter, and 6-7, 260-pound sackmaster David Paine (142 tackles, 22 sacks as a high school senior for Melrose High in Memphis) may be putting the pads during games in 1999 as well. Mike DuBose must be ecstatic after also landing defensive line standouts Kenny King (6-4, 270) and Gerald Clark (6-7, 260), who spurned offers from several of his home state Florida schools to come to Alabama.

8. FLORIDA

Much of the signing-day talk was about the two in-state studs (RB Nick Maddox, QB Anquan Boldin) who made 11th-hour decisions to play for Florida State rather than the Gators. However, Steve Spurrier was still able to land three *Parade* All-Americans among his 22 signees. The best of the lot is the nation's top-rated cornerback, Lito Sheppard (8 INTs last season), who is expected to start by the year 2000. The Gators landed arguably the nation's best linebacking trio in Matt Farrior, Bryon Harmon, and Mike Nattiel. Oh yes, Spurrier found himself another quarterback gem to develop. All-America QB Rex Grossman, a 6-2, 205-pounder from Indiana, will likely be handed the keys to the Gators' high-octane offense in a couple years. Elgin Hicks is a speedster who looks like he'll continue to make life miserable for SEC defensive backs on fall Saturday afternoons.

9. MIAMI (Fla.)

Perhaps nobody helped themselves more on the offensive side of the ball than the Hurricanes, as coach Butch Davis nabbed his third consecutive excellent class. Wherever Davis decides to use Jason Geathers can't be a wrong choice. Blessed with 4.4 speed and NFL wide receiver size (6-2, 210), Geathers excelled at four offensive positions last season for Boca Raton (Fla.) Spanish River High School. Andre Johnson and Tory Mitchell (both 4.3 sprinters) were among the most coveted wide receivers in this class. Vernon Carey (6-5, 330), who played at traditional prep power Miami Northwestern, was one of the nation's most sought-after linemen.

10. MICHIGAN

Though the Wolverines landed only four top-100 players—DBs Jeremy LeSueur and Charles Drake as well as offensive linemen Demetrious Solomon (6-7, 290) and Tony Pape (6-7, 285)—coach Lloyd Carr and his staff should be more than content with this group which should eventually provide a double-digit amount of starters within three years. Drake is a player to watch. Drake is the same size (6-1, 175) and possesses the same blazing speed (4.28 in the 40) as recent Heisman Trophy winner Charles Woodson.

CATCH A RISING STAR

"In 32 years of coaching, I've never seen anybody come close to Christopher's talent. He wasn't a man among boys. He was something at a higher level than that."

—Ramapo, NJ H.S. coach Mike Miello

CHRIS SIMMS

BY JEREMY TREATMAN

Chris Simms never forgot his visit to the University of Texas. Even after verbally committing to the University of Tennessee on a New York City cable TV sports show last December 15, Simms, the 6-foot, 5-inch 215-pound consensus top high school player in the country, found himself having serious second thoughts.

And third ones, too.

So just a week before the national signing day in early February, Simms stunned college football fans everywhere by calling an audible and announcing that he would write his name on a letter of intent with Texas instead of with the newly-crowned national champs.

"I know there was a lot of speculation about why I did what I did," said Simms, the son of former NFL great Phil Simms. "It had nothing to do with the fact that Tennessee recruited another high school quarterback. It was just that I realized I liked my visit to Texas more and more and never got it out of my mind. Deep down, Texas is where I wanted to go, and I'm happy with my choice now."

"I remember his mom called me one night and asked if I could come over the house," said Mike Miello, Chris' high school coach at Ramapo (N.J.) High School. "Chris told me that he was having second thoughts, that all the criteria he was looking for was at Texas and not at Tennessee. I said, 'What are you going to Tennessee for?' The next day, he called the Tennessee coaches and told them what was on his mind. He did it the right way."

Miello said he understood how the whole scenario unfolded, how his young quarterback with impeccable decision-making skills on the field had some doubts when it came time to make the biggest decision of his life off the field.

"His recruiting lived up to all its billing," Miello said. "The pressure on Chris for four years, especially that last season, was unbelievable. You can just imagine his phone ringing off the hook day and night. Every time he walked the hallways at school, 10 kids would ask him what he was doing next year. I think he wanted to make an initial (verbal) decision in response to that pressure."

Said Texas coach Mack Brown: "I thought Chris had a great visit here with his brother and his mom. I thought he really fell in love with Austin. I think sometimes you make a decision a little hastily and then realize it was not in your best interest. I give Chris credit for having the courage to change his mind."

The final, albeit delayed, decision ended months of the speculation, rumors, recruiting, and fanfare that come with being the nation's number-one football schoolboy. However, in this case, the fanfare and rumors lasted many more months—48 to be exact—as Simms stole the spotlight from the first day he put on the pads for Ramapo (N.J.) High in 1995. For four years, people wanted to know everything about the first Raiders' player to start at quarterback as a freshman and play in every game over a four-year period. The consequences weren't all positive, either. Simms earned all his accolades without full support from his community, at first.

"There was a bit of resentment because we had seniors who were supplanted by Chris that first year,"

"People say, 'Oh, you're Phil Simms' kid. Everything has been handed to you,' Chris said last year. 'That's bull. I work harder than anybody in the country...'"

recalls Miello. "But in time, all the kids saw how special Chris was. He wasn't getting any special treatment, and he didn't want any special treatment. He earned the position by being the best player."

Four years later, it's unlikely Ramapo or any other high school team will ever see the likes of a Chris Simms again. His career totals are staggering: 381 of 640 (59%) for 7,055 yards, 63 TDs, and just 13 INTs. As a senior, he was 106 for 185 for a single-season school record 2,239 yards, 18 TDs and just four interceptions during a 9-2 campaign, which followed two perfect seasons. As a result, he was named *USA Today's* Offensive Player of the Year.

"In 32 years of coaching, I've never seen anybody come close to Christopher's talent," said Miello. "He wasn't a man among boys. He was something at a higher level than that."

How far above, you ask? "I thought he should have gotten a few write-in votes for the Heisman," joked Wayne Hills (N.J.) coach Chris Olsen.

He may get some of those votes in the coming years. Simms is likely to dress for games his freshman season at Texas now that Texas backup Adam Dunn has signed a lucrative contract to play baseball in the Cincinnati Reds organization. Still, Simms won't likely repeat his high school feat of being a four-year starter. Texas returns quarterback Major Applewhite, who as a red-shirt freshman last season led the Longhorns (9-3) to a 38-11 Cotton Bowl win over Mississippi State.

"I can deal with whatever happens, sitting, redshirting, or playing," says Simms. "I know this is a big jump and I'm entering a big-time program. I have a lot to learn at this level, and I'm anxious to learn it."

One of the reasons Simms is already so far ahead of most quarterbacks his age is his background. Not too many people have a dad with a Super Bowl Ring who "passes" him the salt at dinner every night.

"I don't think it was a life like people think it is,"

"What a thrill for us that Chris decided to come to Texas," said (coach Mack) Brown... "Chris will make an impact here before too long. We're really excited to have him."

Simms told *USA Today*. "Because of my dad, I've seen what it takes to get to the top—I've lived with it—so I know you've got to dedicate your heart and soul to football. Your upbringing doesn't determine success. It's the person who loves the game the most who always wins out."

Simms resents any sentiment that states he's at the level he's at because of whose son he is.

"People say, 'Oh, you're Phil Simms' kid. Everything has been handed to you,'" Chris said last year. "That's bull. I work harder than anybody in the country. I care more than anybody else. Nobody worries more than me. I dream about football. I have nightmares about throwing interceptions in big games."

The younger Simms has more than backed up those words over the years. Since the 8th grade, Simms has trained in the offseason with a private conditioning coach. During the football seasons, he's worked an additional two hours daily on strength and running mechanics training. He also has been known to "hire" his dad for some tutoring on passing. Currently, he's working out five days a week. "He can be so anal," said dad, Phil. "He's upset when a spiral isn't a perfect spiral. I try to tell him that a completion is a completion."

Miello tells the younger Simms that his dad had that spirit, too.

"I think Chris is like his dad," said Miello. "He's a quarterback with a linebacker's heart and a professor's mentality. I think the two of them have an excellent relationship, too. I've always said that Phil will be the best coach Chris will ever have. Phil prepared him for all this, physically and mentally. He's been a tremendous influence on him."

At the same time, Miello is cautious to compare Chris Simms to his dad, especially since everybody has compared the two for the last four years.

"Who cares really if everybody is going to compare him to his dad in college and the pros? Chris has never got caught up in that," Miello says. "I've never coached a kid who loves the game like he does. He's a throwback to the way the game used to be played. If he's not playing, he's practicing. That's not how most kids are anymore."

Texas fans are ecstatic to have a quarterback of Simms' stature join the team. How it all unfolds, playing time-wise, with a player like Applewhite who has three years of eligibility remaining, is anybody's guess. But one thing seems certain—no one will be surprised if Simms is in there before too long.

"If he doesn't succeed, that means recruiting guys like me and coaches at all levels all over the country don't know anything," said Allen Wallace, the publisher of *SuperPrep*. "He has everything you'd want in a quarterback: A lively arm, good mechanics, great decision making ability, and he loves the game."

This has certainly not been lost on Brown, who with the addition of Simms has brought in the nation's top-rated class this season. "What a thrill for us that Chris decided to come to Texas," said Brown. "You can never have just one quality quarterback anymore. Chris will make an impact here before too long. We're really excited to have him."

1998 NCAA Statistics

FINAL POLLS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

(first place votes in parentheses)

TEAM	W-L	PTS	TEAM	W-L	PTS
1. Tennessee (70)	13-0	1,750	14. Georgia	9-3	785
2. Ohio State	11-1	1,673	15. Texas	9-3	740
3. Florida State	11-2	1,574	16. Arkansas	9-3	621
4. Arizona	12-1	1,535	17. Penn State	9-3	619
5. Florida	10-2	1,463	18. Virginia	9-3	544
6. Wisconsin	11-1	1,427	19. Nebraska	9-4	454
7. Tulane	12-0	1,252	20. Miami (Fla.)	9-3	426
8. UCLA	10-2	1,123	21. Missouri	8-4	335
9. Georgia Tech	10-2	1,122	22. Notre Dame	9-3	315
10. Kansas State	11-2	1,086	23. Virginia Tech	9-3	256
11. Texas A&M	11-3	1,071	24. Purdue	9-4	236
12. Michigan	10-3	1,052	25. Syracuse	8-4	161
13. Air Force	12-1	980			

ESPN/USA TODAY

(first place votes in parentheses)

TEAM	W-L	PTS	TEAM	W-L	PTS
1. Tennessee (62)	13-0	1,550	14. Georgia	9-3	677
2. Ohio State	11-1	1,473	15. Penn State	9-3	640
3. Florida State	11-2	1,376	16. Texas	9-3	577
4. Arizona	12-1	1,347	17. Arkansas	9-3	566
5. Wisconsin	11-1	1,289	18. Virginia	9-3	485
6. Florida	10-2	1,282	19. Virginia Tech	9-3	471
7. Tulane	12-0	1,117	20. Nebraska	9-4	321
8. UCLA	10-2	998	21. Miami (Fla.)	9-3	291
9. Kansas State	11-2	991	22. Notre Dame	9-3	256
10. Air Force	12-1	971	23. Purdue	9-4	233
11. Georgia Tech	10-2	932	24. Syracuse	8-4	192
12. Michigan	10-3	863	25. Missouri	8-4	171
13. Texas A&M	11-3	839			

Others receiving votes: Colorado 46, Marshall 45, Oregon 28, Mississippi State 10, Miami (Ohio) 9, West Virginia 6, Idaho 2, Texas Christian 2, Mississippi 1, USC 1.

Others receiving votes: Mississippi State 50, Marshall 49, Colorado 38, Oregon 37, West Virginia 18, Kentucky 15, Texas Christian 11, Mississippi 8, Miami (Ohio) 7, Wyoming 6, Idaho 2, North Carolina 1.

INDIVIDUAL NCAA LEADERS

RUSHING

	CAR	YDS	AVG	YDSPG		CAR	YDS	AVG	YDSPG		CAR	YDS	AVG	YDSPG
1 Ricky Williams, Texas	361	2124	5.9	193.09	18 Shaun Alexander, Alabama	258	1178	4.6	107.09	35 Chad Morton, Southern Cal	188	967	5.1	96.70
2 Travis Prentice, Miami (Ohio)	365	1787	4.9	162.45	19 Autry Denson, Notre Dame	251	1176	4.7	106.91	36 Gerard Arnold, Memphis	208	1059	5.1	96.27
3 Mike Cloud, Boston College	308	1726	5.6	156.91	20 Mike Anderson, Utah	244	1173	4.8	106.64	37 Ketric Sanford, Houston	222	1054	4.7	95.82
4 Ricky Williams, Texas Tech	306	1582	5.2	143.82	21 Jaime Kimbrough, Fresno St.	213	1168	5.5	106.18	38 Demarco McClesley, Cincinnati	162	861	5.3	95.67
5 Devin West, Missouri	283	1578	5.6	143.45	22 Darren Davis, Iowa St.	294	1166	4.0	106.00	39 Kevin Brown, Washington St.	215	1046	4.9	95.09
6 Amos Zereoue, West Va.	261	1430	5.5	143.00	23 Chris Lemon, Nevada	253	1154	4.6	104.91	40 Demario Brown, Utah St.	210	846	4.0	94.00
7 Dennis Manns, New Mexico St.	269	1469	5.5	133.55	24 Michael Wiley, Ohio St.	182	1147	6.3	104.27	41 Ken Simonton, Oregon St.	224	1028	4.6	93.45
8 Edgerrin James, Miami (Fla.)	242	1416	5.9	128.73	25 Eron Hurley, Boise St.	223	1142	5.1	103.82	42 Rodnick Phillips, Southern Meth.	239	1115	4.7	92.92
9 Ron Dayne, Wisconsin	268	1279	4.8	127.90	26 Leroy Collins, Louisville	218	1134	5.2	103.09	43 Darnell Fields, Western Mich.	189	1016	5.4	92.36
10 Steve Hookfin, Ohio	273	1315	4.8	119.55	27 Marques Brigham, Wyoming	259	1114	4.3	101.27	44 Lamont Jordan, Maryland	169	906	5.4	90.60
11 Thomas Jones, Virginia	238	1303	5.5	118.45	28 Basil Mitchell, TCU	166	1111	6.7	101.00	45 David Winbush, Kansas	209	974	4.7	88.55
12 Eric Flowers, Central Mich.	292	1302	4.5	118.36	29 Ronney Jenkins, Brigham Young	252	1307	5.2	100.54	46 J.R. Redmond, Arizona St.	166	883	5.3	88.30
13 Kevin Faulk, LSU	229	1279	5.6	116.27	30 Jonas Lewis, San Diego St.	181	897	5.0	99.67	47 Chrys Chukwuma, Arkansas	149	870	5.8	87.00
14 James Johnson, Mississippi St.	236	1383	5.9	115.25	31 Doug Chapman, Marshall	252	1184	4.7	98.67	48 Travis Minor, Florida St.	191	857	4.5	85.70
15 Joel Thomas, Idaho	231	1229	5.3	111.73	32 Deuce McAllister, Mississippi	212	1082	5.1	98.36	49 Nathan Simmons, Oklahoma St.	204	937	4.6	85.18
16 Trung Candidate, Arizona	166	1225	7.4	111.36	33 De'mond Parker, Oklahoma	204	1077	5.3	97.91	50 Larry Ned, San Diego St.	153	762	5.0	84.67
17 Derrick Nix, Southern Miss.	226	1180	5.2	107.27	34 Sedrick Irvin, Michigan St.	272	1167	4.3	97.25					

PASSING EFFICIENCY RATING (min. 15 att. per game)

	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	PTS		ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	PTS		ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	PTS
1 Shaun King, Tulane	328	223	3232	36	183.3	18 Chad Pennington, Marshall	432	279	3419	24	146.2	35 Andrew Zow, Alabama	256	143	1969	11	129.2
2 Akili Smith, Oregon	325	191	3307	30	170.4	19 Doug Johnson, Florida	274	154	2346	19	145.2	36 Aaron Brooks, Virginia	290	156	2319	12	128.4
3 Daunte Culpepper, Central Fla. ...	402	296	3690	28	170.2	20 Tee Martin, Tennessee	267	153	2164	19	144.4	37 Ryan Eslinger, Colorado St.	336	206	2386	14	128.2
4 Tim Rattay, Louisiana Tech	559	380	4943	46	164.8	21 Ryan Kealy, Arizona St.	261	150	2161	19	144.1	38 Walt Church, Eastern Mich.	355	213	2650	13	128.0
5 David Neill, Nevada	344	199	3249	29	159.8	22 Lee Roberts, Southern Miss.	325	185	2680	24	143.8	39 Bill Burke, Michigan St.	358	195	2595	19	127.3
6 Michael Bishop, Kansas St.	295	164	2844	23	159.6	23 David Garrard, East Carolina	255	157	2091	14	143.1	40 Jay Stoner, Wyoming	316	183	2373	11	126.1
7 Donovan McNabb, Syracuse	251	157	2134	22	158.9	24 Drew Brees, Purdue	516	336	3753	36	142.6	41 Jonathan Crosswhite, Utah	221	128	1615	10	126.1
8 Marc Bulger, West Va.	369	240	3178	27	157.2	25 Joe Hamilton, Georgia Tech	259	145	2166	17	141.7	42 John Welsh, Idaho	185	98	1387	11	124.8
9 Cade McNown, UCLA	323	188	3130	23	156.9	26 Chris Weinke, Florida St.	286	145	2487	19	141.5	43 Mike Bath, Miami (Ohio)	209	108	1500	12	123.3
10 Joe Germaine, Ohio St.	346	209	3108	24	154.7	27 Kevin Feterik, Brigham Young ...	336	202	2718	16	140.2	44 Rob Peters, Texas Tech	183	96	1269	9	122.6
11 Tim Couch, Kentucky	553	400	4275	36	153.3	28 Quincy Carter, Georgia	290	176	2484	12	140.1	45 Wayne Madkin, Mississippi St. ...	199	96	1532	11	122.1
12 Chris Redman, Louisville	473	309	4042	29	151.0	29 Tim Lester, Western Mich.	406	236	3311	22	136.6	46 Oscar Davenport, N. Carolina ...	182	100	1208	8	121.9
13 Jarious Jackson, Notre Dame ...	188	104	1740	13	149.5	30 Mike Moschetti, Colorado	276	162	2104	15	135.6	47 Ty Houghtaling, New Mexico St. ...	267	130	1820	20	121.7
14 Scott Covington, Miami (Fla.) ...	270	159	2301	19	147.8	31 Tom Brady, Michigan	323	200	2427	14	133.1	48 Mike McMahon, Rutgers	276	143	2203	12	121.6
15 Major Applewhite, Texas	273	159	2453	18	147.4	32 Jamie Barnette, N. Carolina St. ...	377	193	3169	18	131.7	49 Chris Kasteler, San Jose St.	221	115	1505	12	120.8
16 Herb Tyler, LSU	250	153	2018	18	147.2	33 Billy Volek, Fresno St.	261	151	1973	10	131.7	50 Corby Jones, Missouri	178	87	1281	9	120.4
17 Clint Stoenner, Arkansas	312	167	2629	26	146.7	34 Scott Mutryn, Boston College ...	286	171	2218	12	131.1						

TOTAL OFFENSE

	PLAYS	YDS	YDSPG		PLAYS	YDS	YDSPG		PLAYS	YDS	YDSPG
1 Tim Rattay, Louisiana Tech	602	4840	403.33	18 Quincy Carter, Georgia	389	2768	251.64	35 Jason McKinley, Houston	410	2320	210.91
2 Chris Redman, Louisville	513	4009	400.90	19 Graham Leigh, New Mexico	487	2904	242.00	36 Jose Davis, Kent	405	2101	210.10
3 Daunte Culpepper, Central Fla.	543	4153	377.55	20 Antwan Randle El, Indiana	500	2618	238.00	37 Scott Mutryn, Boston College	368	2298	208.91
4 Tim Couch, Kentucky	617	4151	377.36	21 Brian Kuklick, Wake Forest	474	2574	234.00	38 Deontay Kenner, Cincinnati	295	2067	206.70
5 David Neill, Nevada	409	3351	372.33	22 Clint Stoenner, Arkansas	363	2572	233.82	39 Cleo Lemon, Arkansas St.	454	2480	206.67
6 Shaun King, Tulane	468	3764	342.18	22 Donovan McNabb, Syracuse	386	2572	233.82	40 Ryan Kealy, Arizona St.	294	2058	205.80
7 Drew Brees, Purdue	575	3921	326.75	24 Chris Weinke, Florida St.	333	2319	231.90	41 Tee Martin, Tennessee	370	2451	204.25
8 Akili Smith, Oregon	399	3490	317.27	25 Aaron Brooks, Virginia	374	2546	231.45	42 Bart Hendricks, Boise St.	366	2020	202.00
9 Cade McNown, UCLA	386	3297	299.73	26 Romaro Miller, Mississippi	386	2306	230.60	43 Chris Wallace, Toledo	493	2423	201.92
10 Michael Bishop, Kansas St.	472	3592	299.33	27 Lee Roberts, Southern Miss.	360	2532	230.18	44 Ryan Eslinger, Colorado St.	392	2419	201.58
11 Tim Lester, Western Mich.	476	3262	296.55	28 Doug Johnson, Florida	303	2280	228.00	45 David Garrard, East Carolina	382	2216	201.45
12 Jamie Barnette, North Caro St.	460	3182	289.27	29 Joe Hamilton, Georgia Tech	371	2464	224.00	46 Matt Lytle, Pittsburgh	422	2212	201.09
13 Walt Church, Eastern Mich.	406	2555	283.89	30 Herb Tyler, LSU	335	2200	220.00	47 Kevin Feterik, Brigham Young	442	2607	200.54
14 Chad Pennington, Marshall	483	3396	283.00	31 Jarious Jackson, Notre Dame	301	2181	218.10	48 Todd Bandhauer, Iowa St.	383	2167	197.00
15 Marc Bulger, West Va.	400	3091	281.00	32 Major Applewhite, Texas	306	2390	217.27	49 Bill Burke, Michigan St.	423	2342	195.17
16 Joe Germaine, Ohio St.	402	3044	276.73	33 Brock Huard, Washington	359	1955	217.22	50 Mike McMahon, Rutgers	338	2136	194.18
17 Todd Husak, Stanford	495	3026	275.09	34 Jay Stoner, Wyoming	398	2377	216.09				

RECEPTIONS PER GAME

	G	CT	YDS	CTPG		G	CT	YDS	CTPG		G	CT	YDS	CTPG
1 Troy Edwards, Louisiana Tech	12	140	1996	11.67	17 David Saunders, West Va.	11	69	788	6.27	33 Lavell Boyd, Louisville	11	61	804	5.55
2 Dameane Douglas, California	11	100	1150	9.09	19 Darnell McDonald, Kansas St.	12	75	1092	6.25	36 Ibn Green, Louisville	10	55	884	5.50
3 Geoff Noisy, Nevada	11	94	1405	8.55	20 Jajuan Dawson, Tulane	11	68	947	6.18	37 Kevin Johnson, Syracuse	11	60	894	5.45
4 Arnold Jackson, Louisville	11	90	1165	8.18	20 Jammie Deese, Wake Forest	11	68	826	6.18	37 Luke Levenson, Minnesota	11	60	854	5.45
5 Torry Holt, North Carolina St.	11	88	1604	8.00	22 Isaac Jones, Purdue	12	72	801	6.00	37 Scottie Montgomery, Duke	11	60	793	5.45
5 Siaha Burley, Central Fla.	11	88	1142	8.00	22 Sherrod Gideon, Southern Miss.	11	66	1186	6.00	40 Plaxico Burress, Michigan St.	12	65	1013	5.42
7 Craig Yeast, Kentucky	11	85	1311	7.73	22 Latef Grim, Pittsburgh	10	60	906	6.00	41 Randall Lane, Purdue	12	64	915	5.33
8 Jerrian James, Houston	11	80	931	7.27	25 Brandon Stokley, SW Louisiana	11	65	1173	5.91	41 Richmond Flowers, Duke	9	48	704	5.33
9 Anthony White, Kentucky	11	78	582	7.09	25 Mark Nonsant, Central Fla.	11	65	847	5.91	43 Wane McGarity, Texas	11	58	1087	5.27
10 D'wayne Bates, Northwestern	12	83	1245	6.92	27 Desmond Clark, Wake Forest	10	59	866	5.90	43 Dee Miller, Ohio St.	11	58	887	5.27
11 Marty Booker, Northeast La.	11	75	1168	6.82	28 Troy Walters, Stanford	9	52	880	5.78	43 Greg Ainsworth, Oregon St.	11	58	749	5.27
12 David Boston, Ohio St.	11	74	1330	6.73	28 Wes Caswell, Tulsa	9	52	598	5.78	46 Dennis Northcutt, Arizona	12	63	922	5.25
12 P.J. Franklin, Tulane	11	74	1174	6.73	30 Steve Neal, Western Mich.	11	63	1121	5.73	47 Daniel Jones, Utah	11	57	809	5.18
12 Deronnie Pitts, Stanford	11	74	1012	6.73	30 Orlando Iglesias, Houston	11	63	772	5.73	47 Wendell Montgomery, Wyoming	11	57	789	5.18
15 Dane Looker, Washington	10	64	662	6.40	32 Jermaine Sheffield, Eastern Mich.	11	62	953	5.64	49 Larry Foster, LSU	11	56	722	5.09
16 Travis McGriff, Florida	11	70	1357	6.36	33 Chad Plummer, Cincinnati	11	61	852	5.55	50 Peter Warrick, Florida St.	12	61	1232	5.08
17 Trevor Insley, Nevada	11	69	1220	6.27	33 Reggie Allen, Central Mich.	11	61	832	5.55					

RECEIVING YARDS PER GAME

	G	CT	YDS	YDSPG		G	CT	YDS	YDSPG		G	CT	YDS	YDSPG
1 Troy Edwards, Louisiana Tech	12	140	1996	166.33	18 Steve Neal, Western Mich.	11	63	1121	101.91	35 Kevin Johnson, Syracuse	11	60	894	81.27
2 Torry Holt, North Carolina St.	11	88	1604	145.82	19 Anthony Lucas, Arkansas	10	43	1004	100.40	36 Damon Griffin, Oregon	11	50	892	81.09
3 Geoff Noisy, Nevada	11	94	1405	127.73	20 Wane McGarity, Texas	11	58	1087	98.82	37 Dee Miller, Ohio St.	11	58	887	80.64
4 Travis McGriff, Florida	11	70	1357	123.36	21 Troy Walters, Stanford	9	52	880	97.78	38 Chris Coleman, North Carolina St.	11	52	876	79.64
5 David Boston, Ohio St.	11	74	1330	120.91	22 Tony Hartley, Oregon	11	48	1015	92.27	39 Donnie Hart, Texas Tech	11	48	871	79.18
6 Craig Yeast, Kentucky	11	85	1311	119.18	23 Deronnie Pitts, Stanford	11	74	1012	92.00	40 Richmond Flowers, Duke	9	48	704	78.22
7 Trevor Insley, Nevada	11	69	1220	110.91	24 Darnell McDonald, Kansas St.	12	75	1092	91.00	41 Luke Levenson, Minnesota	11	60	854	77.64
8 Sherrod Gideon, Southern Miss.	11	66	1186	107.82	25 Latef Grim, Pittsburgh	10	60	906	90.60	42 Chad Plummer, Cincinnati	11	61	852	77.45
9 P.J. Franklin, Tulane	11	74	1174	106.73	26 Dez White, Georgia Tech	11	46	973	88.45	43 Aaron Lockett, Kansas St.	12	44	928	77.33
10 Brandon Stokley, SW Louisiana	11	65	1173	106.64	27 Ibn Green, Louisville	10	55	884	88.40	44 Todd Pinkston, Southern Miss.	11	52	848	77.09
11 Marty Booker, Northeast La.	11	75	1168	106.18	28 Jermaine Sheffield, Eastern Mich.	11	62	953	86.64	45 Mark Nonsant, Central Fla.	11	65	847	77.00
12 Arnold Jackson, Louisville	11	90	1165	105.91	29 Desmond Clark, Wake Forest	10	59	866	86.60	46 Dennis Northcutt, Arizona	12	63	922	76.83
13 Dameane Douglas, California	11	100	1150	104.55	30 Jajuan Dawson, Tulane	11	68	947	86.09	47 Peerless Price, Tennessee	12	61	920	76.67
14 Siaha Burley, Central Fla.	11	88	1142	103.82	31 Nian Taylor, Washington St.	10	45	847	84.70	48 Jeremy McDaniel, Arizona	12	58	916	76.33
15 D'wayne Bates, Northwestern	12	83	1245	103.75	32 Jerrian James, Houston	11	80	931	84.64	49 Randall Lane, Purdue	12	64	915	76.25
16 Danny Farmer, UCLA	11	51	1132	102.91	33 Plaxico Burress, Michigan St.	12	65	1013	84.42	50 Reggie Allen, Central Mich.	11	61	832	75.64
17 Peter Warrick, Florida St.	12	61	1232	102.67	34 Na Brown, North Carolina	11	55	897	81.55					

INTERCEPTIONS

	G	NO	YDS	TD	IPG		G	NO	YDS	TD	IPG		G	NO	YDS	TD	IPG
1 Jamar Fletcher, Wisconsin	9	6	99	2	.67	13 Steve Fisher, North Carolina	11	5	77	1	.45	35 Ruben Carter, Stanford	10	4	17	0	.40
2 Pat Dennis, Northeast La.	11	7	196	2	.64	13 Dempsey Dees, Boise St.	11	5	65	0	.45	35 Teako Brown, Florida	10	4	3	0	.40
2 Lloyd Harrison, North Carolina St.	11	7	51	0	.64	13 Chris McAlister, Arizona	11	5	64	1	.45	37 Jay Baker, Miami (Ohio)	11	4	219	3	.36
4 Hank Poteat, Pittsburgh	10	6	53	0	.60	13 Kirby Smart, Georgia	11	5	62	0	.45	37 Dustin Cohen, Miami (Ohio)	11	4	149	2	.36
5 Wade Perkins, Missouri	11	6	129	1	.55	13 Armon Hatcher, Oregon St.	11	5	60	0	.45	37 Courtney Jackson, Arizona St.	11	4	116	0	.36
5 David Macklin, Penn St.	11	6	120	1	.55	13 Jerry Porter, West Va.	11	5	57	0	.45	37 Dwight Platt, UAB	11	4	106	2	.36
5 Tim Smith, Stanford	11	6	69	0	.55	13 Jabar Robinson, Indiana	11	5	53	0	.45	37 Kevin Monroe, East Carolina	11	4	103	1	.36
8 Chris Claiborne, Southern Cal	12	6	159	2	.50	13 Zac Painter, Arkansas	11	5	36	0	.45	37 Gary Baxter, Baylor	11	4	87	0	.36
8 Dannelle Derricott, Marshall	12	6	118	0	.50	13 Lincoln Dupree, Eastern Mich.	11	5	28	0	.45	37 Ryan Roques, UCLA	11	4	79	1	.36
8 Mario Edwards, Florida St.	12	6	109	0	.50	13 Greg Yeldell, Indiana	11	5	23	0	.45	37 Larry Atkins, UCLA	11	4	77	0	.36
8 Chappell Mitchell, Arkansas St.	12	6	41	0	.50	28 William Peterson, Michigan	9	4	76	1	.44	37 Marcus Spencer, Alabama	11	4	66	0	.36
12 Jason Walker, Brigham Young	13	6	46	0	.46	28 Tony George, Florida	9	4	39	0	.44	37 Greg Van Leer, Wyoming	11	4	60	0	.36
13 Cliff Crosby, Maryland	11	5	133	1	.45	30 Robert Bean, Mississippi St.	12	5	136	1	.42	37 Jimmy Williams, Vanderbilt	11	4	59	0	.36
13 Keion Carpenter, Virginia Tech	11	5	92	1	.45	30 Deon Grant, Tennessee	12	5	79	0	.42	37 Danny Adams, Cincinnati	11	4	57	0	.36
13 Frederick Lewis, Louisiana Tech	11	5	86	1	.45	30 Tracy Hart, Southern Meth.	12	5	62	1	.42	37 Forrest Foster, East Carolina	11	4	50	1	.36
13 Ike Charlton, Virginia Tech	11	5	81	1	.45	30 Myron Terry, Colorado St.	12	5	55	1	.42	37 Reggie Austin, Wake Forest	11	4	45	0	.36
13 Kenny Dale Rowland, Army	11	5	79	1	.45	30 Renaldo Hill, Michigan St.	12	5	23	0	.42						

PUNTING (min. 3.6 punts per game)

	NO	AVG		NO	AVG		NO	AVG		NO	AVG
1 Joe Kristosik, UNLV	76	46.17	14 Aron Langley, Wyoming	54	43.39	27 Jason Malecki, Boston College	50	42.14	40 Jimmy Kibble, Virginia Tech	52	41.52
2 Josh Bidwell, Oregon	47	45.81	15 Kyle Atteberry, Baylor	73	43.26	28 Colin Vadheim, SMU	77	42.08	41 Jeff Ferguson, Oklahoma	61	41.46
3 Stephen Baker, Arizona St.	56	45.73	16 Andy Kohl, New Mexico St.	58	42.91	29 Jeff Roberts, Fresno St.	62	42.02	42 Chris Hunter, Utah	59	41.42
4 Dave Zastudil, Ohio	50	45.32	17 Andrew Bayes, East Carolina	64	42.89	30 Scott Elder, Oklahoma St.	63	41.94	43 Kevin Laird, Clemson	75	41.39
5 Bill Lafleur, Nebraska	52	44.94	18 Tripp Moore, Wake Forest	63	42.89	31 Ryan Smith, Arkansas St.	74	41.92	44 Steve Fitts, Illinois	76	41.37
6 Andy Pollock, Bowling Green	50	44.86	19 Nick Avondet, Eastern Mich.	63	42.78	32 Jason Bloom, New Mexico	75	41.79	45 Don Copeland, San Diego St.	61	41.33
7 Deone Horinek, Colorado St.	52	44.83	20 Courtney Leavitt, South Carolina	42	42.67	33 Doug Dunkin, Syracuse	41	41.71	46 Jamie Purser, Southern Miss.	51	41.27
8 Brian Schmitz, North Carolina	75	44.76	21 Donald Scott, Virginia	58	42.64	34 Ryan Springston, Arizona	58	41.67	47 Keith Cottrell, Florida St.	62	41.26
9 Graham White, Army	47	44.70	22 Pat Pidgeon, Penn St.	59	42.58	35 Mike Hayes, Akron	48	41.67	47 Kent McCullough, Miami (Ohio)	62	41.26
10 Kevin Stemke, Wisconsin	67	44.01	23 Rodney Williams, Georgia Tech	50	42.52	35 Hunter Smith, Notre Dame	42	41.67	49 Gabe Lindstrom, Toledo	78	40.97
11 Daniel Pope, Alabama	66	43.95	24 Jerry Arguello, Utah St.	58	42.19	37 J.J. Standring, Northwestern	78	41.54	50 Royce Huffman, Texas Christian	63	40.78
12 Craig Jarrett, Michigan St.	64	43.80	25 Jeff Walker, Mississippi St.	44	42.18	38 Nick Pietsch, Colorado	54	41.54			
13 Shane Lechler, Texas A&M	80	43.56	26 John Baker, North Texas	66	42.17	39 Vince Sebo, Missouri	44	41.52			

PUNT RETURNS (min. 1.2 returns per game)

	NO	YDS	TD	AVG		NO	YDS	TD	AVG		NO	YDS	TD	AVG
1 David Allen, Kansas St.	33	730	4	22.12	18 Adrian Reese, Ball St.	23	279	0	12.13	35 Rod Richardson, Army	12	126	0	10.50
2 Damon Gourdine, San Diego St.	16	294	2	18.38	19 Marcellus Harris, East Caro.	14	167	0	11.93	36 Jermaine Walker, Boston Coll.	19	189	0	9.95
3 Nick Davis, Wisconsin	27	424	2	15.70	20 Vern Benard, Idaho	25	298	1	11.92	37 Angelo Harrison, Virginia Tech	38	376	0	9.89
4 David Boston, Ohio St.	18	268	1	14.89	21 Deltha O'Neal, California	38	447	0	11.76	38 Eddie Shaw, Southern Miss.	30	293	1	9.77
5 Payton Williams, Fresno St.	24	343	1	14.29	22 Darran Hall, Colorado St.	26	302	1	11.62	39 Spencer Bragg, Tulsa	15	146	0	9.73
6 Charlie Rogers, Georgia Tech	30	425	2	14.17	23 Kevin Faulk, LSU	23	265	1	11.52	40 Terrence Wilkins, Virginia	17	165	0	9.71
7 Siaha Burley, Central Fla.	21	293	1	13.95	24 Dennis Northcutt, Arizona	38	437	0	11.50	41 Aaron Roderick, Brigham Young	31	290	0	9.35
8 Peter Warrick, Florida St.	15	208	0	13.87	25 Omar Smith, San Jose St.	19	217	1	11.42	42 Charles Tharp, Hawaii	17	153	0	9.00
9 Gari Scott, Michigan St.	32	440	0	13.75	26 Joe Walker, Nebraska	25	283	1	11.32	43 Joe Jarzynka, Washington	45	402	1	8.93
10 J.R. Redmond, Arizona St.	18	246	1	13.67	27 Terrance Richardson, Okla. St.	28	312	0	11.14	44 James Whitley, Michigan	16	142	0	8.88
11 Torry Holt, North Caro. St.	20	273	2	13.65	28 Ladouphoyus McCalla, Rice	16	178	0	11.13	45 Don Morgan, Nevada	23	203	0	8.83
12 Kevin Prentiss, Mississippi St.	26	339	1	13.04	29 Jarrair Jackson, Oklahoma	37	410	0	11.08	46 Michael Greer, Georgia	14	123	0	8.79
13 John Bernard, Southwestern La.	16	201	1	12.56	30 Michael Fletcher, Oregon	43	476	2	11.07	47 Josh Barnes, Northwestern	22	189	0	8.59
14 Ryan Roques, UCLA	19	238	1	12.53	31 Henri Childs, Kansas	15	166	1	11.07	48 Marcus Knight, Michigan	18	153	0	8.50
15 Damone Williams, Marshall	32	400	1	12.50	32 Cory Peterson, Mississippi	19	209	1	11.00	49 Daniel Jones, Utah	31	262	0	8.45
16 Lucius Foster, UAB	17	210	0	12.35	33 Bruce Branch, Penn St.	41	446	1	10.88	50 Justin McCareins, Northern Ill.	28	234	0	8.36
17 Javier Sanchez, UTEP	17	208	0	12.24	34 Matt Farmer, Air Force	19	202	1	10.63					

KICKOFF RETURNS (min. 1.2 returns per game)

	NO	YDS	TD	AVG		NO	YDS	TD	AVG		NO	YDS	TD	AVG
1 Broderick McGrew, North Texas	18	587	1	32.61	18 Paul Miranda, Central Fla.	25	644	0	25.76	35 Deonce Whitaker, San Jose St.	51	1214	0	23.80
2 Dee Moronkola, Washington St.	16	504	2	31.50	19 Tony Walker, Utah St.	14	355	0	25.36	36 Arvin Richard, Alabama	25	595	0	23.80
3 Kevin Johnson, Syracuse	23	690	2	30.00	20 Daniel Jones, Utah	20	507	2	25.35	37 Ben Kelly, Colorado	20	474	0	23.70
4 Tim Alexander, Oregon St.	27	799	1	29.59	21 Del Bates, Nevada	16	402	1	25.13	38 Antoine Henderson, Minnesota	14	330	0	23.57
5 Craig Yeast, Kentucky	14	410	1	29.29	22 Duane James, UNLV	30	749	0	24.97	39 Mitch Bowles, Kansas	16	377	0	23.56
6 Toure Butler, Washington	22	626	1	28.45	23 Maurice Gallery, UAB	25	623	0	24.92	40 Dion Marion, New Mexico	20	471	1	23.55
7 Deltha O'Neal, California	22	624	0	28.36	24 Markeith Cooper, Auburn	18	447	0	24.83	41 Jimmy Williams, Vanderbilt	29	678	1	23.38
8 Sam Simmons, Northwestern	22	607	0	27.59	25 Rod Richardson, Army	21	521	0	24.81	42 Jeremy Jones, Texas	14	322	0	23.00
9 Russell Harvey, Illinois	15	406	0	27.07	26 Jason Cooper, Oregon	12	297	0	24.75	43 Lamont Chappell, East Carolina	16	366	0	22.88
10 Antwan Edwards, Clemson	13	350	0	26.92	27 Kaheem Maxwell, Ohio	22	542	1	24.64	44 Richmond Flowers, Duke	20	457	0	22.85
11 Mike Rigell, Brigham Young	23	617	1	26.83	28 Reggie Allen, Central Mich.	24	589	1	24.54	45 Keith Cobb, Memphis	19	432	0	22.74
12 Najeh Davenport, Miami (Fla.)	12	319	0	26.58	29 Damon Gourdine, San Diego St.	22	539	0	24.50	46 Wesley Morris, Hawaii	21	476	0	22.67
13 Robert Kilow, Arkansas St.	16	425	0	26.56	30 Kelsey Adams, SMU	15	367	0	24.47	47 Nick Davis, Wisconsin	14	317	0	22.64
14 John Norman, Texas Tech	15	396	0	26.40	31 Jamaal Fobbs, Oklahoma St.	22	534	0	24.27	48 Jerome Thomas, Idaho	16	362	0	22.63
15 Dez White, Georgia Tech	26	682	1	26.23	32 Benny Clark, Western Mich.	15	364	0	24.27	49 Ladaian Tomlinson, TCU	17	383	0	22.53
16 DeMario Jones, Miami (Ohio)	14	363	0	25.93	33 Kevin Prentiss, Mississippi St.	19	458	1	24.11	50 Zeke Parker, Louisville	18	404	0	22.44
17 Kahlil Hill, Iowa	18	465	1	25.83	34 Deon Mitchell, Northern Ill.	31	738	0	23.81					

FIELD GOALS

	FGA	FG	PCT	FGPG		FGA	FG	PCT	FGPG		FGA	FG	PCT	FGPG
1 Sebastian Janikowski, Fla. St.	32	27	.844	2.25	16 Chris Birkholz, Texas Tech	21	16	.762	1.45	33 Chris Sailer, UCLA	19	13	.684	1.18
2 Brad Bohn, Utah St.	28	24	.857	2.18	16 Kris Stockton, Texas	21	16	.762	1.45	33 John Markham, Vanderbilt	21	13	.619	1.18
3 Paul Edinger, Michigan St.	26	22	.846	2.00	16 Jeremy Aldrich, Colorado	22	16	.727	1.45	33 Ben Davis, Idaho	25	13	.520	1.18
3 Shayne Graham, Virginia Tech	32	22	.688	2.00	21 Brian Gwyns, Northwestern	24	17	.708	1.42	38 Kris Brown, Nebraska	21	14	.667	1.17
5 Derek Franz, Colorado St.	26	21	.808	1.91	22 Tim Sydes, Oklahoma St.	18	15	.833	1.36	38 Billy Malashevich, Marshall	21	14	.667	1.17
6 Martin Gramatica, Kansas St.	31	22	.710	1.83	22 Ricky Bishop, UTEP	20	15	.750	1.36	38 Adam Abrams, Southern Cal.	23	14	.609	1.17
7 Nathan Villegas, Oregon	22	20	.909	1.82	22 Chris Kaylakie, TCU	20	15	.750	1.36	41 Tim Hardaway, Southern Miss.	16	10	.625	1.11
7 Travis Forney, Penn St.	29	20	.690	1.82	22 Brian Clark, Northern Ill.	20	15	.750	1.36	42 Jim Sanson, Notre Dame	15	11	.733	1.10
9 Todd Latourette, Arkansas	24	17	.708	1.70	22 Garrett Courtney, North Texas	23	15	.652	1.36	43 Matt Bryant, Baylor	15	12	.800	1.09
10 Matt Davenport, Wisconsin	20	18	.900	1.64	27 Jay Feely, Michigan	20	16	.800	1.33	43 Robert Bironas, Auburn	16	12	.750	1.09
10 Brad Selent, Western Mich.	26	18	.692	1.64	28 Nick Ceca, New Mexico St.	14	13	.929	1.30	43 Nathan Trout, Syracuse	16	12	.750	1.09
12 Sims Lenhardt, Duke	22	16	.727	1.60	28 Matthew Burdick, Wake Forest	18	13	.722	1.30	43 Joe Garcia, Kansas	17	12	.706	1.09
13 Jeff Hall, Tennessee	24	19	.792	1.58	30 Josh McGee, North Carolina	18	14	.778	1.27	43 Brian Kopka, Maryland	18	12	.667	1.09
14 Jose Cortez, Oregon St.	26	17	.654	1.55	31 Brian Hazelwood, Miss. St.	24	15	.625	1.25	43 Todd Braverman, Virginia	19	12	.632	1.09
15 Owen Pochman, Brigham Young	27	20	.741	1.54	32 Russell Bynum, Texas A&M	20	16	.800	1.23	43 Mike Waddell, Houston	19	12	.632	1.09
16 Ryan White, Memphis	16	16	1.000	1.45	33 Eric Olsen, Army	17	13	.765	1.18	43 Brad Chambers, Georgia Tech	20	12	.600	1.09
16 Aaron Elling, Wyoming	20	16	.800	1.45	33 Jeff Hanna, Fresno St.	18	13	.722	1.18					

SCORING

	TD	XP	FG	PTS	PTPG		TD	XP	FG	PTS	PTPG		TD	XP	FG	PTS	PTPG
1 Troy Edwards, Louisiana Tech	31	2	0	188	15.67	18 Paul Edinger, Michigan St.	0	28	12	94	8.55	35 Amos Zereoue, West Va.	13	0	0	78	7.80
2 Ricky Williams, Texas	28	0	0	168	15.27	18 Nathan Trout, Syracuse	0	58	12	94	8.55	36 Owen Pochman, Brigham Young	0	41	20	101	7.77
3 Martin Gramatica, Kansas St.	0	69	22	135	11.25	18 Brad Selent, Western Mich.	0	40	18	94	8.55	37 Mike Cloud, Boston College	14	0	0	84	7.64
4 Travis Prentice, Miami (Ohio)	20	0	0	120	10.91	18 Kris Stockton, Texas	0	46	16	94	8.55	37 Ryan Shaw, New Mexico St.	13	6	0	84	7.64
5 Leroy Collins, Louisville	19	2	0	116	10.55	22 Chris Sailer, UCLA	0	54	13	93	8.45	37 Kevin Johnson, Syracuse	14	0	0	84	7.64
6 Edgerrin James, Miami (Fla.)	19	0	0	114	10.36	23 Derek Franz, Colorado St.	0	28	21	91	8.27	37 Chris Lemon, Nevada	14	0	0	84	7.64
7 Sebastian Janikowski, Fla. St.	0	42	27	123	10.25	23 Matt Davenport, Wisconsin	0	37	18	91	8.27	41 Brad Chambers, Georgia Tech	0	46	12	82	7.45
8 Nathan Villegas, Oregon	0	52	20	112	10.18	25 Blane Morgan, Air Force	15	0	0	90	8.18	41 Sherrod Gideon, Southern Miss.	13	4	0	82	7.45
9 Devin West, Missouri	18	0	0	108	9.82	25 Aubrey Denson, Notre Dame	15	0	0	90	8.18	43 Kris Brown, Nebraska	0	47	14	89	7.42
10 Shayne Graham, Virginia Tech	0	37	22	103	9.36	25 Craig Yeast, Kentucky	15	0	0	90	8.18	44 Seth Hanson, Kentucky	0	48	11	81	7.36
11 Kevin Faulk, LSU	17	0	0	102	9.27	25 Thomas Jones, Virginia	15	0	0	90	8.18	45 Demarco McCleskey, Cincinnati	11	0	0	66	7.33
11 Shaun Alexander, Alabama	17	0	0	102	9.27	29 Travis Forney, Penn St.	0	29	20	89	8.09	46 Greg Lomax, Akron	13	2	0	80	7.27
11 Joel Thomas, Idaho	16	6	0	102	9.27	29 Brad Bohn, Utah St.	0	17	24	89	8.09	46 Torry Holt, North Carolina St.	13	2	0	80	7.27
14 Todd Latourette, Arkansas	0	41	17	92	9.20	29 Brad Palazzo, Tulane	0	68	7	89	8.09	46 Jose Cortez, Oregon St.	0	29	17	80	7.27
15 Doug Chapman, Marshall	18	2	0	110	9.17	32 Kelvin Eafon, Arizona	16	0	0	96	8.00	49 Ibn Green, Louisville	12	0	0	72	7.20
16 Eric Flowers, Central Mich.	16	0	0	96	8.73	33 David Boston, Ohio St.	14	2	0	86	7.82	49 J.R. Redmond, Arizona St.	12	0	0	72	7.20
17 Jeff Hall, Tennessee	0	47	19	104	8.67	33 Dan Stultz, Ohio St.	0	50	12	86	7.82						

ALL-PURPOSE RUNNERS

	RUSH	REC	PR	KOR	YDS	YDSPG		RUSH	REC	PR	KOR	YDS	YDSPG
1 Troy Edwards, Louisiana Tech	227	1996	235	326	2784	232.00	26 Damon Gourdine, San Diego St.	26	649	294	539	1508	137.09
2 Ricky Williams, Texas	2124	262	0	0	2386	216.91	27 Gari Scott, Michigan St.	0	843	440	354	1637	136.42
3 Kevin Faulk, LSU	1279	287	265	278	2109	191.73	28 Travis McGriff, Florida	-3	1357	145	0	1499	136.27
4 Torry Holt, North Carolina St.	102	1604	273	0	1979	179.91	29 Reggie Allen, Central Mich.	77	832	0	589	1498	136.18
5 Jaime Kimbrough, Fresno St.	1168	391	0	393	1952	177.45	30 Ronney Jenkins, Brigham Young	1307	349	0	91	1747	134.38
6 Amos Zereoue, West Va.	1430	175	0	168	1773	177.30	31 Leroy Collins, Louisville	1134	326	0	0	1460	132.73
7 Mike Cloud, Boston College	1726	198	0	0	1924	174.91	32 Ron Dayne, Wisconsin	1279	45	0	0	1324	132.40
8 Travis Prentice, Miami (Ohio)	1787	107	0	0	1894	172.18	33 De'mond Parker, Oklahoma	1077	176	0	198	1451	131.91
9 Craig Yeast, Kentucky	87	1311	33	410	1841	167.36	34 Michael Wiley, Ohio St.	1147	160	0	143	1450	131.82
10 Kevin Johnson, Syracuse	105	894	145	690	1834	166.73	35 John Bernard, Southwestern La.	492	103	201	647	1443	131.18
11 Deonce Whitaker, San Jose St.	719	37	19	1214	1989	165.75	36 Siaha Burley, Central Fla.	6	1142	293	0	1441	131.00
12 Ricky Williams, Texas Tech	1582	176	0	0	1758	159.82	37 Leandre Moore, Ball St.	909	81	0	447	1437	130.64
13 J.R. Redmond, Arizona St.	883	194	246	235	1558	155.80	38 Richmond Flowers, Duke	9	704	0	457	1170	130.00
14 Edgerrin James, Miami (Fla.)	1416	255	0	0	1671	151.91	39 Kevin Prentiss, Mississippi St.	68	681	339	458	1546	128.83
15 Dez White, Georgia Tech	0	973	0	682	1655	150.45	40 Geoff Noisy, Nevada	11	1405	0	0	1416	128.73
16 Devin West, Missouri	1578	43	0	0	1621	147.36	40 Trung Canidate, Arizona	1225	191	0	0	1416	128.73
17 David Boston, Ohio St.	1	1330	268	0	1599	145.36	42 Joel Thomas, Idaho	1229	180	0	0	1409	128.09
18 Tim Alexander, Oregon St.	3	620	169	799	1591	144.64	43 Darren Davis, Iowa St.	1166	242	0	0	1408	128.00
19 Daniel Jones, Utah	9	809	262	507	1587	144.27	44 Boo Williams, South Caro.	239	335	72	760	1406	127.82
20 Dennis Manns, New Mexico St.	1469	106	0	0	1575	143.18	45 Peter Warrick, Florida St.	85	1232	208	0	1525	127.08
21 Shaun Alexander, Alabama	1178	385	0	0	1563	142.09	46 Deon Mitchell, Northern Ill.	24	567	46	738	1375	125.00
22 Arnold Jackson, Louisville	33	1165	216	131	1545	140.45	47 Troy Walters, Stanford	6	880	87	142	1115	123.89
23 Ketric Sanford, Houston	1054	171	0	305	1530	139.09	48 P.J. Franklin, Tulane	55	1174	48	82	1359	123.55
24 Thomas Jones, Virginia	1303	179	13	27	1522	138.36	49 Chad Morton, Southern Cal.	967	131	21	116	1235	123.50
25 Dennis Northcutt, Arizona	69	922	437	219	1647	137.25	50 James Johnson, Mississippi St.	1383	98	0	0	1481	123.42

BOWL GAME RESULTS

Las Vegas Bowl: N. Carolina 20, San Diego St. 13
 Motor City Bowl: Marshall 48, Louisville 29
 Aloha Bowl: Colorado 51, Oregon 43
 Oahu Bowl: Air Force 45, Washington 25
 Heritage Bowl: Southern 28, Bethune-Cookman 2
 Insight.com Bowl: Missouri 34, West Virginia 31

Muscat City Bowl: Virginia Tech 38, Alabama 7
 Micron PC Bowl: Miami (Fla.) 46, N.C. State 23
 Alamo Bowl: Purdue 37, Kansas State 34
 Humanitarian Bowl: Idaho 42, S. Mississippi 35
 Holiday Bowl: Arizona 23, Nebraska 20
 Liberty Bowl: Tulane 41, Brigham Young 27

Sun Bowl: Texas Christian 28, USC 19
 Peach Bowl: Georgia 35, Virginia 33
 Independence Bowl: Mississippi 35, Texas Tech 18
 Outback Bowl: Penn State 26, Kentucky 14
 Cotton Bowl: Texas 38, Mississippi State 11
 Gator Bowl: Georgia Tech 35, Notre Dame 28

Citrus Bowl: Michigan 45, Arkansas 31
 Rose Bowl: Wisconsin 38, UCLA 31
 Sugar Bowl: Ohio State 24, Texas A&M 14
 Orange Bowl: Florida 31, Syracuse 10
 Fiesta Bowl: Tennessee 23, Florida State 16

NCAA TEAM STATS

TOTAL OFFENSE

FOOTBALL OFFENSE											
	PLAYS	YDS	YDSPG		PLAYS	YDS	YDSPG		PLAYS	YDS	YDSPG
1 Louisville	883	6156	559.64	29 Texas Tech	821	4449	404.45	57 New Mexico	860	4405	367.08
2 Louisiana Tech	894	6479	539.92	30 Georgia	710	4419	401.73	58 Oklahoma St.	796	4032	366.55
3 Kentucky	911	5876	534.18	31 Florida St.	872	4816	401.33	59 Bowling Green	795	4030	366.36
4 Tulane	816	5578	507.09	32 Tennessee	792	4786	398.83	60 Indiana	780	4003	363.91
5 Nevada	869	5577	507.00	33 Southern Miss.	747	4377	397.91	61 Eastern Mich.	801	3985	362.27
6 Ohio St.	853	5539	503.55	34 Stanford	859	4347	395.18	62 Fresno St.	723	3929	357.18
7 Central Fla.	789	5365	487.73	35 Arkansas	752	4333	393.91	63 Penn St.	748	3926	356.91
8 UCLA	785	5309	482.64	36 Air Force	801	4722	393.50	64 Washington	801	3912	355.64
9 Kansas St.	887	5742	478.50	37 Mississippi	821	4320	392.73	65 South Carolina	798	3907	355.18
10 Oregon	785	5260	478.18	38 Georgia Tech	749	4276	388.73	66 Wake Forest	786	3870	351.82
11 Texas	762	5177	470.64	39 Nebraska	844	4619	384.92	67 Wyoming	756	3866	351.45
12 Western Mich.	832	5147	467.91	40 Colorado St.	823	4617	384.75	68 Southern California	787	4212	351.00
13 New Mexico St.	908	5084	462.18	41 LSU	740	4231	384.64	69 Missouri	733	3850	350.00
14 Florida	754	5081	461.91	42 Notre Dame	721	4207	382.45	70 Duke	847	3728	338.91
15 West Virginia	791	5053	459.36	43 East Carolina	773	4203	382.09	71 Alabama	731	3707	337.00
16 Purdue	912	5484	457.00	44 Brigham Young	923	4962	381.69	72 TCU	731	3699	336.27
17 Miami (Fla.)	769	4966	451.45	45 Tulsa	820	4191	381.00	73 Iowa St.	759	3692	335.64
18 Arizona	832	5339	444.92	46 Michigan	853	4517	376.42	74 San Jose St.	781	4020	335.00
19 Idaho	809	4885	444.09	47 Michigan St.	913	4506	375.50	75 San Diego St.	742	3668	333.45
20 North Carolina St.	811	4871	442.82	48 Akron	792	4123	374.82	76 Ohio	765	3644	331.27
21 Marshall	889	5212	434.33	49 Navy	741	4122	374.73	77 North Carolina	747	3616	328.73
22 Syracuse	780	4730	430.00	50 Washington St.	767	4113	373.91	78 Rutgers	742	3615	328.64
23 Virginia	764	4693	426.64	51 UTEP	800	4112	373.82	79 Toledo	834	3935	327.92
24 Boise St.	869	4649	422.64	52 Oregon St.	830	4093	372.09	80 Memphis	716	3589	326.27
25 Cincinnati	828	4599	418.09	53 Army	743	4062	369.27	81 Colorado	759	3581	325.55
26 Utah	829	4568	415.27	54 Miami (Ohio)	770	4047	367.91	82 Arkansas St.	806	3896	324.67
27 Arizona St.	822	4530	411.82	55 Central Mich.	817	4042	367.45	83 Mississippi St.	727	3870	322.50
28 Boston Col.	765	4527	411.55	56 Houston	809	4041	367.36	84 Pittsburgh	784	3540	321.82

TOTAL DEFENSE

TOTAL DEFENSE																			
PLAYS			YDS	YDSPG	PLAYS			YDS	YDSPG	PLAYS			YDS	YDSPG					
1	Florida St.	747	2578	214.8	29	Oklahoma St.	694	3629	329.9	57	Wyoming	743	4034	366.7	85	Wake Forest	776	4409	400.8
2	Ohio St.	762	2835	257.7	30	Mississippi	708	3645	331.4	58	Houston	738	4050	368.2	86	Iowa St.	751	4414	401.3
3	Kansas St.	759	3220	268.3	31	Colorado St.	840	3988	332.3	59	Alabama	771	4059	369.0	87	Louisiana Tech	873	4828	402.3
4	Wisconsin	714	2973	270.3	32	Virginia	748	3666	333.3	60	Northwestern	845	4430	369.2	88	Washington	769	4427	402.5
5	Brigham Young	830	3561	273.9	33	Arizona	835	4019	334.9	61	Illinois	817	4074	370.4	89	Temple	768	4445	404.1
6	Oklahoma	694	3067	278.8	34	Southern Miss.	766	3690	335.5	62	Miami (Fla.)	802	4114	374.0	90	Arizona St.	774	4472	406.5
7	Virginia Tech	710	3134	284.9	35	San Diego St.	766	3701	336.5	63	Akron	762	4115	374.1	91	LSU	760	4496	408.7
8	Texas Tech	710	3135	285.0	36	Ohio	710	3721	338.3	64	North Carolina St.	756	4119	374.5	92	North Texas	805	4586	416.9
9	Florida	773	3153	286.6	37	California	798	3743	340.3	65	East Caro.	797	4128	375.3	93	Army	762	4593	417.5
10	Texas A&M	871	3761	289.3	38	Purdue	850	4120	343.3	66	Western Mich.	796	4186	380.5	94	Rutgers	783	4707	427.9
11	Air Force	813	3522	293.5	39	Utah	778	3780	343.6	67	Bowling Green	700	4194	381.3	95	UNLV	822	4721	429.2
12	Penn St.	769	3240	294.5	40	TCU	731	3803	345.7	68	Rice	730	4201	381.9	96	Tulane	790	4733	430.3
13	Colorado	740	3256	296.0	41	North Carolina	787	3813	346.6	69	Kentucky	704	4247	386.1	97	San Jose St.	899	5165	430.4
14	Southern Methodist	800	3566	297.2	42	Tulsa	749	3814	346.7	70	Kansas	799	4262	387.5	98	Ball St.	786	4747	431.5
15	Michigan	804	3591	299.3	43	Notre Dame	775	3819	347.2	71	Washington St.	808	4266	387.8	99	UCLA	847	4757	432.5
16	Miami (Ohio)	768	3301	300.1	44	UAB	750	3827	347.9	72	Oregon	754	4288	389.8	100	Vanderbilt	801	4853	441.2
17	Tennessee	826	3636	303.0	45	Pittsburgh	743	3831	348.3	73	Oregon St.	868	4294	390.4	101	Baylor	781	4854	441.3
18	Arkansas	758	3370	306.4	46	Duke	734	3832	348.4	74	Eastern Mich.	852	4296	390.5	102	UTEP	763	4870	442.7
19	Auburn	715	3374	306.7	47	Minnesota	807	3840	349.1	75	Indiana	803	4298	390.7	103	Northeast La.	833	4872	442.9
20	Mississippi St.	835	3755	312.9	48	Georgia	792	3881	352.8	76	Idaho	781	4298	390.7	104	Stanford	784	4879	443.5
21	Missouri	721	3447	313.4	49	West Virginia	776	3893	353.9	77	New Mexico	866	4735	394.6	105	Arkansas St.	902	5361	446.8
22	Nebraska	813	3764	313.7	50	Central Mich.	797	3895	354.1	78	Hawaii	839	4753	396.1	106	Memphis	817	5008	455.3
23	Marshall	866	3811	317.6	51	Fresno St.	814	3913	355.7	79	Boise St.	804	4357	396.1	107	Navy	771	5090	462.7
24	Utah St.	787	3519	319.9	52	Toledo	880	4303	358.6	80	Nevada	800	4361	396.5	108	New Mexico St.	791	5122	465.6
25	Clemson	742	3523	320.3	53	Maryland	765	3971	361.0	81	South Carolina	732	4365	396.8	109	Kent	767	5209	473.5
26	Central Fla.	724	3544	322.2	54	Northern Ill.	812	3991	362.8	82	Georgia Tech	807	4373	397.5	110	Louisville	821	5287	480.6
27	Syracuse	711	3595	326.8	55	Michigan St.	881	4360	363.3	83	Boston Col.	768	4378	398.0	111	Cincinnati	748	5328	484.4
28	Southern California	931	3957	329.8	56	Texas	760	4008	364.4	84	Iowa	769	4388	398.9	112	Southwestern La.	779	5607	509.7

RUSHING OFFENSE

	CARRIES	YDS	YDSPG
1 Army	610	3232	293.8
2 Ohio	680	3044	276.7
3 Air Force	648	3201	266.8
4 Navy	580	2874	261.3
5 Rice	624	2829	257.2
6 Nebraska	636	3045	253.8
7 New Mexico St.	579	2790	253.6
8 TCU	542	2630	239.1
9 Missouri	546	2552	232.0
10 Syracuse	521	2512	228.4
11 Miami (Ohio)	545	2480	225.5
12 Kansas St.	571	2699	224.9
13 Bowling Green	546	2367	215.2
14 Arizona	523	2561	213.4
15 Virginia	468	2344	213.1
16 Notre Dame	507	2338	212.5
17 Tennessee	517	2536	211.3
18 Utah	529	2266	206.0
19 Oklahoma St.	550	2249	204.5
20 Wisconsin	553	2247	204.3
21 Texas	444	2246	204.2
22 Miami (Fla.)	456	2232	202.9
23 Tulane	477	2226	202.4
24 Texas Tech	535	2219	201.7
25 Ohio St.	472	2185	198.6

RUSHING DEFENSE

	CARRIES	YDS	YDSPG
1 Ohio St.	348	741	67.4
2 Florida St.	412	958	79.8
3 Wisconsin	377	986	89.6
4 Florida	393	998	90.7
5 Brigham Young	444	1186	91.2
6 Tennessee	420	1127	93.9
7 Arkansas	390	1050	95.5
8 Penn St.	407	1070	97.3
9 Utah	344	1071	97.4
10 Kansas St.	433	1179	98.3
11 Virginia Tech	420	1124	102.2
12 Arizona	416	1233	102.8
13 Minnesota	433	1141	103.7
14 Clemson	415	1150	104.5
15 Air Force	486	1362	113.5
16 Nebraska	466	1402	116.8
17 Virginia	406	1304	118.5
18 Texas Tech	454	1308	118.9
19 Auburn	403	1311	119.2
20 Oklahoma St.	409	1314	119.5
21 Oklahoma	429	1332	121.1
22 Texas A&M	497	1582	121.7
23 Michigan	475	1467	122.3
24 Utah St.	445	1357	123.4
25 Marshall	510	1511	125.9

PASSING OFFENSE

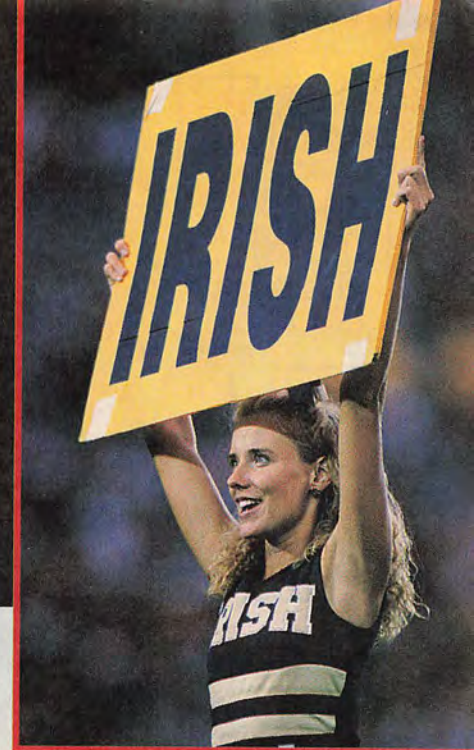
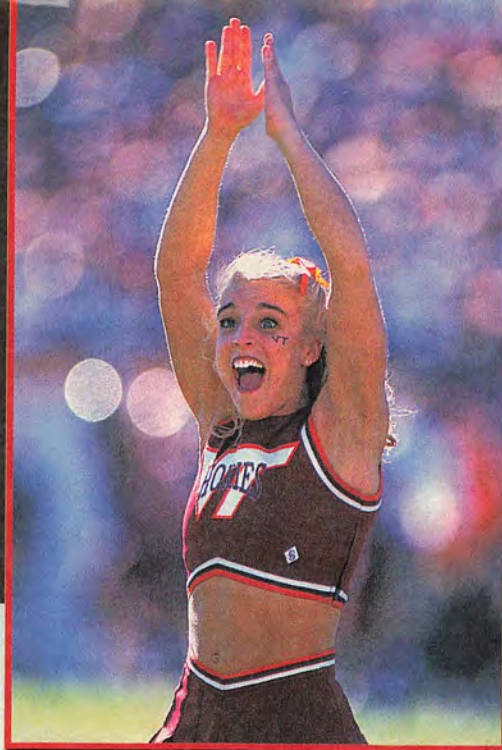
	ATT	CMP	YDS	YDSPG
1 Louisiana Tech	600	402	5185	432.1
2 Kentucky	574	414	4534	412.2
3 Louisville	515	338	4498	408.9
4 Nevada	458	265	3992	362.9
5 Florida	417	238	3807	346.1
6 Central Fla.	411	302	3771	342.8
7 Purdue	541	352	3978	331.5
8 Stanford	513	263	3516	319.6
9 Western Mich.	409	238	3414	310.4
10 North Carolina St.	405	210	3401	309.2
11 Oregon	346	199	3400	309.1
12 Ohio St.	381	226	3354	304.9
13 Tulane	339	230	3352	304.7
14 West Virginia	382	245	3248	295.3
15 UCLA	333	194	3240	294.5
16 Marshall	445	286	3504	292.0
17 Wake Forest	455	255	3151	286.5
18 Eastern Mich.	421	243	3010	273.6
19 Texas	318	188	2931	266.5
20 Idaho	379	196	2879	261.7
21 Arizona St.	369	207	2849	259.0
22 Oregon St.	463	220	2817	256.1
23 Kansas St.	316	179	3043	253.6
24 Florida St.	357	185	3019	251.6
25 Southern Miss	339	193	2762	251.1

PASS EFFICI



H O M E T O W

Here's a big-time salute to the girls who cheer for the guys... These



N H O N E Y S

All-American angels add an extra touch of class to gridiron gallantry.

THE Last Word

There's No Y2K Crisis in College Football!

BY MICHAEL BRADLEY

Even if the next 1000 years bring us universal rocket travel and an average life expectancy triple our current rate, let's just hope college football remains basically the same...

We're all approaching this Millennium business as if 2000's dawn will bless us with some sort of total knowledge or glorious new perspective on life. All problems will be solved. Absolute happiness will come to everyone. Face it, folks, you're still going to wake up on Jan. 1 with a mighty hangover and all the same worries (perhaps more, depending on your antics on the last New Year's Eve of the 1900s) you had before.

That's not such a bad thing, especially when it comes to college football. We have spent a good portion of this magazine contrasting what has happened in the sport with what is to come. Equipment has changed. Styles of play have changed. The game's essence, however, remains intact. Even if the next 1000 years bring us universal rocket travel and an average life expectancy triple our current rate (a scary thought, especially when high-definition TV is considered), let's just hope college football remains basically the same. It is, without question, the country's greatest sport.

Before all you baseball apologists, pro football zealots and college basketball addicts scream in protest (we're not even going to address hockey, soccer, boxing, tennis or *bleecchhh*-golf fans), consider the sport's compelling arguments for top status on the athletic food chain. Many of them don't even include the actual game itself.

College football is a full-fledged experience, not just a sport. You don't just spend three hours watching a game; you devote an entire Saturday to the event, planning pre- and post-game activities with a fervor usually devoted to a daughter's wedding. We used to make fun of Chris Schenkel when he would talk about color and pageantry, but by God, the man was right. (His commercials about drinking beer from bottles made good sense, too.) Other sports thrive on the actual game itself. College football pro-

vides us with nostalgia, competition, celebration and spectacle from September through early January. Nothing else can top that.

It starts with the tailgate party. No other pre-game ritual comes close, not even the traditional pummeling of the visiting fans before English Premier League soccer matches. Long before kickoff, fans begin assembling outside a stadium in areas designated for nothing other than eating and drinking. What a great concept. You can stand in a field with your trunk open, drink beer and eat sandwiches without worrying about some law-enforcement official's fining you for helping to degenerate the nation's moral fiber. In the SUV next to your's, they're serving wine and cheese. Two cars down, kielbasa is sizzling on the grill. Crack open another cold one, crank up the fight song, and enjoy the moment.

Game? What game? At least that's the attitude of about 40,000 people who invade Baton Rouge six Saturdays a year. They don't have tickets. But they're enjoying the party just the same.

These are no impromptu gatherings, fueled by a last-minute run to the Piggly Wiggly for chips and beer—not that there's anything wrong with that, either. Nope, collegiate tailgate parties involve considerable preparation and feature varied menus. There is a familial atmosphere to the affairs, a stark contrast to the Nordic drinkfests that spring up in parking lots throughout NFL cities—that is, if they're even allowed. Many Philadelphia Eagles fans have to bury their quarter-kegs in the ground and barbecue in the trunks of their cars to avoid breaking municipal laws. Meanwhile, just about any stretch of land large enough to accommodate a vehicle can serve as a party site on a college campus.

No other sport features such a pre-game carnival. If it rains, tent cities spring up. If it's cold, folks bundle up. The spirit of sharing a pair of gloves with a friend, just so he can hold a beer on a freezing November morning cannot be recreated in any other athletic arena. You won't find too many college hoop fans hanging out in a parking lot for two hours before a game. They're too busy making hats out of old basketballs and slathering themselves with face paint. If college football had no other redeeming qualities, the tailgate party would almost give it a lead big enough to hold off the challenges of practically every other sport. But there's more.

Say what you want about the halftime shows staged by marching bands—how many *Star Wars*, Old & New extravaganzas do you think we'll endure

this year?—but the thought of a 225-piece ensemble providing a soundtrack to a sporting event is pretty stirring. From the moment the band begins its march toward the stadium until the final note of the alma mater is played following the contest, fans are treated to a show that at times rivals the action on the field.

Watch the Ohio State band spell out Ohio, complete with the tuba players' dotting the I, and try to suppress the goosebumps. Marvel at the Texas A&M band's precision patterns. Best of all, you won't have to hear Gary Glitter's "Rock and Roll, Part Two" played once throughout the three-plus hours a football band is performing. Nope, you'll just hear "Fight On For Old SC," "The Notre Dame Victory March" or "The Victors" 10-15 times. That's tough to beat.

The stadiums themselves still retain a charm that has been largely unspoiled by the corporate infringements that have turned professional arenas into gigantic cash registers. About the only things that can compete are retro baseball parks, and even they are losing character thanks to the nation's obsession with recreating them in every city. Say what you want about Camden Yards or Jacobs Field, but Wrigley and Fenway still rule, largely because they're the originals. And no matter how attractive the stadium is and how impressive the view of the skyline might be, once the game starts, you're still watching baseball.

College football stadiums, meanwhile, exude character and tradition because of their ages. Universities don't have \$350 million lying around to build a new home for the grid team every 25 years, not when the student newspaper still has manual typewriters. So, the aging Leviathans endure: Michigan's enormous oval. Florida Field's nooks and crannies. The Rose Bowl. The Coliseum. Ohio State's horseshoe. College basketball has the Palestra and Cameron Indoor Stadium, but it also has a disturbing trend involving the construction of new cookie-cutter arenas designed to appease the bottom line and take the sport away from its campus roots.

As for the game itself, it continues to get better. Players are faster and stronger than ever before. Defenders who used to be helpless against speedy, athletic backs and ends can often dominate them in one-on-one matchups. Contrast that with college hoops, where just about every coach laments the decay of fundamentals, and shooting percentages fall a little more each year. Pro football and baseball—victims of overexpansion and saddled with dozens of players who don't belong in the big leagues—have seen a drop in their overall quality, while the NBA has become a slam-dance, in which the dunk rules all and point totals are falling faster than the headlines on players' shorts.

College football, meanwhile, discourages the influx of unworthy candidates with its scholarship limits and keeps the quality of its game high by preventing players from jumping to the professional ranks until they have spent three years on campus.

Okay, so there is that bowl thing. It's a problem. Every other team sport in the world decides its champion on the field, while college football still relies heavily on polls and computer rankings to set the stage for a half-baked, one-game, winner-takes-all, made-for-TV "playoff." The good news is that a tournament will probably arrive sometime in the next five or ten years. It has to. Money, Title IX and an inevitable BCS toe-stub will mandate it.

But part of college football's allure has been the uncertainty surrounding its champion. Who was better in '97, Michigan or Nebraska? Did Notre Dame deserve the 1966 national crown, even though it tied Michigan State, 10-10? Last March, Connecticut beat Duke in the NCAA hoop tournament to take the title. End of story. Look toward next year. In college football, seasons can be relived through arguments and what-ifs. It's a fatally flawed system, to be sure, but it does have a character of its own.

Just like college football itself. Not even the new Millennium can spoil it.

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